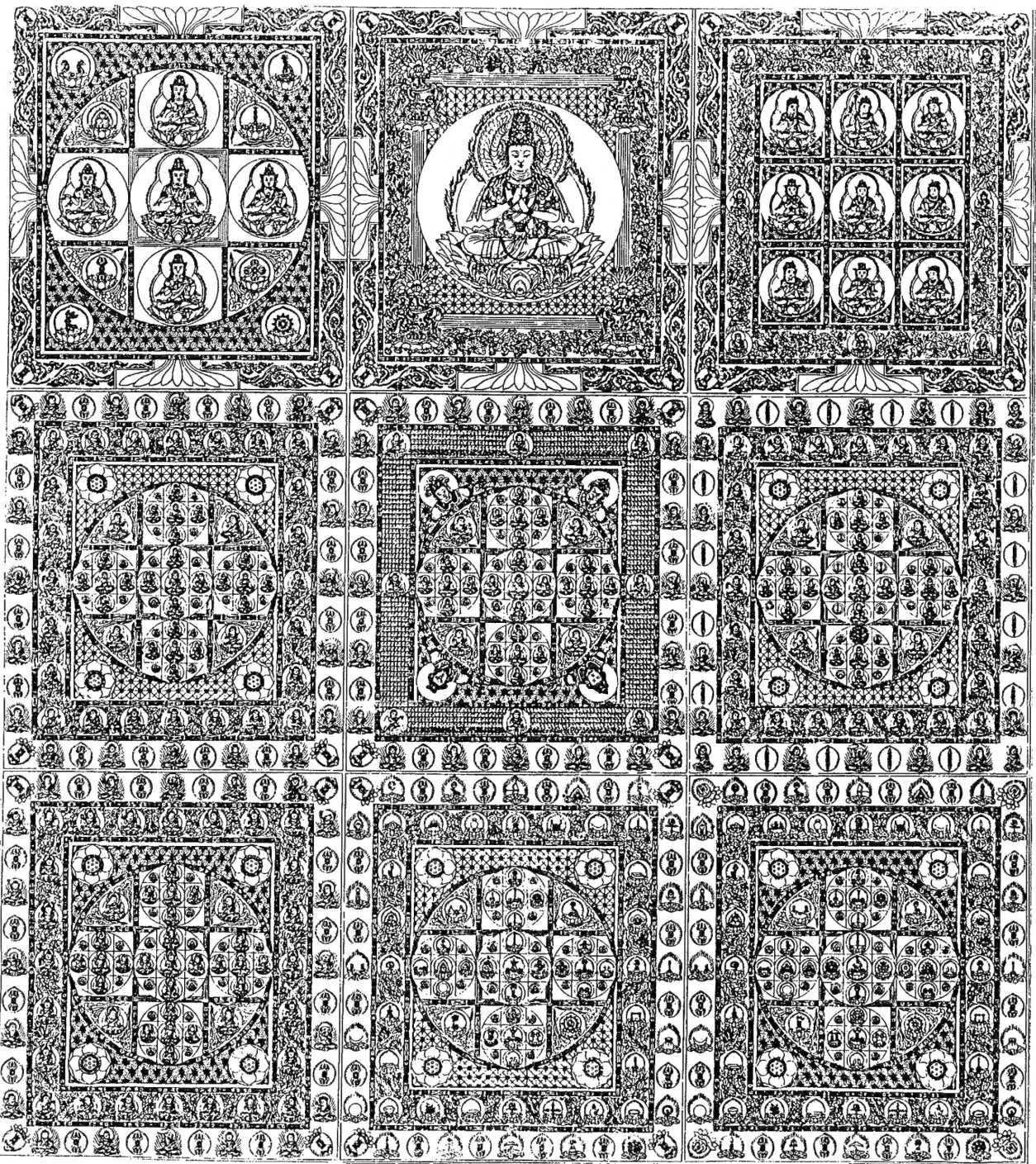


TANTRIC ART AND MEDITATION



Michael Saso

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The Vajra Mandala

TANTRIC ART AND MEDITATION

The Tendai Tradition

Michael Saso



Tendai Educational Foundation • Honolulu

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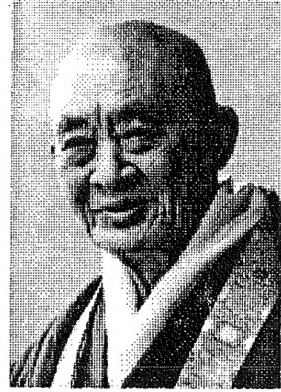
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I must also acknowledge the patience of my two daughters Theresa and Maria who accompanied me to Kyoto, and the interest of my mother Beatrice Saso, and so many others for whom the exploration of inter-religious dialogue is a meaningful experience.

FOREWORD

Japanese Tantric Buddhism has produced two Major schools, the *Taimitsu* Tendai Buddhism, founded by Saicho (Dengyodaishi), and *Tomitsu* Shingon Buddhism, founded by Kukai (Kobodaishi). Shingon was the earliest standard of Tantric practice, brought from China in 807 CE. The Goma Fire Rite was practiced when Saicho opened the first temples on Mt. Hiei. Tendai developed its own quite distinct Tantric practice when Ennin and other monks returned from China after 847 CE. Shikan style Zen meditation, Pure Land and Tantrism were taught by the monks of Mt. Hiei.



Ozazu, Rev. Yamada Ettai

Tantric Buddhism is called an "esoteric" practice because it is learned and transmitted orally, from master to disciple. Since Tantric ritual depended on a direct, oral tradition, the teachings became divided into many ritual schools. From the early Ishin and Danna schools came the Homan, Anoo, and Sanmai schools of Mt. Hiei today. Tendai holds that enlightenment comes from within the self, the so-called Hongaku shiso. During Japan's religious reformation (400 years before Europe), Jodo, Shinshu, Zen, and Nichiren broke away from Tendai and rejected Tantric Buddhism. Tantric art and meditation still have a profound influence on Buddhism today.

To prepare this book Michael Saso went to one of the most renowned Homan masters of Mt. Hiei, the Rev. Ikuta Koken. With the permission of the chief Abbot of Mt. Hiei, the Rev. Yamada Ettai, he studied the oral tradition for ten years. These pages, sponsored by The Tendai Institute, present a summary of that study for inter-religious understanding.

The Rev. Ara Ryokan, Tendai Institute, Hawaii

INTRODUCTION

My interest in Tantric Buddhist meditation began in 1967, when I was first introduced to a *Cheng-i* Orthodox Taoist master named Chuang Teng-yun, in Hsinchu city, north Taiwan. Master Chuang practiced a form of vajra or thunder meditation that was filled with siddham sanskrit mantra and tantric mudra (hand symbols) very much like those used by Tibetan monks. The Taoists of north Taiwan who used these ritual meditations did not know the meaning of the sanskrit words, but used them for their resonant power; each of the mantra, when sounded, summoned a spiritual image or vision, to be used in the tantric form of meditation.

In 1972 while residing in Hokkaido, I was taken to a Goma Fire Rite for a *yakubaraï* exorcism on the occasion of my 42nd birthday. The Goma Fire Rite was performed by a monk named Suzuki of the Tantric Shingon Buddhist sect of Japan. I was fascinated not only by the beauty and perfection of Rev. Suzuki's ritual, but by the astonishing realization that many of the mudra hand gestures and mantric words used during the Goma were similar to those used by Taoist master Chuang of Hsinchu. After the rite was over I approached the Rev. Suzuki, and asked to see the ritual manual he had used, which contained illustrations of the mudra and Chinese phonetic characters giving the pronunciation of the siddham sanskrit words. The mudra and Chinese phonetic mantra were analogous to those in my Taoist manual, brought with me from Hsinchu, Taiwan.

It was not until 1974, on coming to the University of Hawaii to teach in the Department of Religion, that I was able to pursue the comparative research of Buddhist and Taoist meditation further. Honolulu, Hawaii, perhaps like no other place in the world, provides an environment where many forms of Asian cultural and religious practice are found together in one place. Here on the celebration of the first year of Tendai Tantric Buddhism coming to Hawaii from Hieizan, northeast of Kyoto, in Japan, I met the Rev. Ara Ryokan, and saw the Chief Abbot of Mt. Hiei and head of Tendai Buddhism, Ozasu Yamada Ettai perform the Goma. The Tendai version of the Goma Fire Rite was different from the Shingon version I had seen in Hokkaido in two important ways. Tendai Buddhism makes a clear distinction between popular *Kengyo*, devotional Buddhism for the people, and Tantric *Mikkyo* Buddhist practice for the monk. The laity may choose to meditate on the Goma (*Nai Goma*, i.e., interiorize the Goma) in the Tantric manner, or pray for blessings in the popular interpretation of the Goma. Either way, i.e., whether seeking "union" or "favors," the meditator is in the presence of the sacred, the transcendent, or the other shore.

The second great difference, a more profound distinction for the reader to understand, is the difference in the Buddhist Yogacara and Madhyamika schools of practice. Shingon Buddhism, following the Yogacara tradition, emphasizes oneness between the phenomenal and the pure, idealized Buddha world. The visions of the two mandalas are to be kept in the mind. All else is burned away, as the meditator unites him or herself with the transcendent aspects of the Buddha. Tendai Buddhism on the other hand adopts the Madhyamika attitude to reality. The meditator in this time honored form of Buddhist practice does not judge the world to be real or illusory, but suspends all judgment

of reality and inner mind vision as well. Thus the Tendai meditation teaches the meditator to burn away the vision itself, so that nothing is left in the heart or mind bent on union. The Tendai way can be compared to the "Dark Night" of the western mystic tradition, the *Cloud of Unknowing*, and the words of Paul "The eye cannot see, the ear hear, or the mind conceive the vision of God (the Transcendent)."

The reader may test these ideas by following the meditations in the following pages. In the Lotus World meditation, the meditator unites him or her self with the figure of Vairocana Buddha doing Zen meditation, emptying the center of the body, voiding mind and heart of all image. In the Vajra meditation the reader is led in a counter-clockwise motion from the ninth bottom right square upward through the eighth, seventh, sixth square, and so on, into the center of the Vajra-thunder world for union with Buddha Vairocana performing Vipasyana meditation. In this step, everything received from the Buddha is given away, for the sake of all sentient beings. Nothing is kept for the meditator. Finally in the Goma rite, (which appears first in the text, but is performed last in the rite of initiation), the meditator burns away all images of the transcendent, as father, mother, savior, cosmic, and folk religion. No image is left, no desires, not even ashes remain from the burning interior fires of the Goma. Only then can one be truly united with the transcendent "other shore."

The ritual meditations described and interpreted in these pages derives from the Japanese Tendai Buddhist tradition, a Tantric form of Mahayana Buddhism dating from the Heian Period, Kyoto, Japan. The founder of Tendai Buddhism, Saicho, also known as Dengyo Daishi, went to China in 803 A.D., and studied T'ien-t'ai Buddhism and the writings of Chih-i at Mt. T'ien-t'ai, located in the Chekiang Province of southeast China, and Tantric Buddhism at Lung-hsing temple in Yuch-chou for almost a year. Another great Japanese monk named Kukai also traveled to China in that year, and went to the T'ang Chinese capital Ch'ang-an city of west China where he too studied tantric Buddhism, returning to Japan after three years in 807 A.D. Saicho however returned to Japan in 804 A.D. and founded Tendai Buddhism atop Mt. Hiei, to the north of Kyoto city. Kukai founded Shingon Buddhism on Mt. Koya, far to the southwest of Kyoto after his return to Japan. The Tantric Buddhism brought back by these two famous monks to Japan is no longer practiced in China.

Both men brought back the Lotus, Vajra, and Goma meditation rites to early ninth century Japan. Even though Tantric ritual had been in use before these two great monks journeyed to China, the Goma Fire especially became one of the most popular forms of ritual after their return to Japan until today. Japanese men in their forty-second year, and women in their thirty-third year, are advised to attend the Goma for Yakubarai exorcism and blessing as the midlife crisis approaches. So efficacious is the rite thought to be, that all forms of blessing, health, enlightenment, perfection, and even the suppression of one's enemies are thought to be derived from its devout performance. As taught by the meditating tantric masters of Hieizan in Kyoto, the Goma is a vehicle for burning away all impediments to enlightenment, and union with the transcendent Buddha bright-as-the-sun, Vairocana.

The Goma fire rite was first performed in Vedic India, perhaps even before the Aryan invasions of the Indus valley in 1500 B.C. A two volume masterpiece on the fire rite, published by Fritz Stahl with contributions by some of the world's foremost authorities on the Goma was published in 1983 under the title *AGNI: The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*, (Asian Humanities Press, Berkeley). The rite was used as an offering and enticement to the god of fire, Agni, who was thought to send fire down to earth on the back of a large bird for man's benefit. Archaeological remains and modern versions of the rite show that in its most primitive form, the Agni Hotra (Goma) was offered on a huge stone or terracotta altar shaped like a bird. Grains, liquids, and the mythical soma plant were offered to Agni and the other deities who came down from the Indo-European heavens to be wine and dine.

The rite was offered to win divine favors for the people, and as a means of divine union for the priests performing the ritual. Perhaps in the ritualized humor of India's primitive wisdom, the gods of the superior light-skinned Brahmin caste were thought to be burned away in the minds of the dark-skinned native Dasys. Almost from the beginning, the Goma could be offered simultaneously for both reasons. The common lay folk sought nature's good things, while the priestly caste or those seeking perfection offered the fire rite to burn away all impediments to union with the transcendent.

When the Buddha preached his new religion between 560 and 483 B.C., the rites of the Brahmin caste and its belief system, with notions of reincarnation for the privileged, were cast aside. The new doctrines of Buddhism taught that salvation or enlightenment could be won by selfless compassion. Sorrow and suffering were caused by selfish desire. Burning away selfish gain by acts of compassion (the Mahayana interpretation of Buddha's doctrines) did away with the need for Brahmin religion and all its rites. The Goma was certainly not a part of the Buddha's original doctrines. With other Brahminic paraphernalia, it was left aside by those who espoused Buddhist doctrines.

But after a thousand years of growth and spread, when Buddhism became indeed a religion for export, flourishing more on foreign soil than in its native environs, a Tantric form of practice that is, a holistic ascetic that sought enlightenment through the use of mind, mouth, and body became popular in India and China. In this new form of Buddhist practice, the teachings of the Buddha were portrayed by bodily hand dance (mudra), devotional chant (mantra) and geometric or cosmic centered meditation, (mandala). This tantric form of Buddhism traveled across Tibet into China in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., where it was influenced by and mutually molded Taoism in the Central Kingdom.

The Womb or Lotus world mandala (Garbha Datu) was not a part of the ancient Vedic religion, but was invented as a later Buddhist form of Tantric ritual meditation. The Lotus-Womb world is found in artistic representations throughout the kingdoms of north India, Ladakh, Nepal, Mongolia, and Tibet. It is easily identified by the four gates, squares, or rectangles leading to a circular lotus in the center of the mandala. The figure of Vairocana, the Buddha as sunlight with hands folded in the dhyana meditation mudra,

makes the Lotus-womb world easy to identify. It is described in Tantric Buddhist texts of the T'ang period, and was most probably brought to China in the 7th-8th century C.E. It's spiritual goal in these pages is to unite the meditator with the vision of Vairocana, Buddha bright as the sun in the posture of samatha (Zen) meditation.

The Vajra mandala, sometimes translated "Diamond" or "Adamantine" mandala, actually refers to the thunder-lightning weapon symbolic of awakening and enlightenment by the rays issuing from the body of Vairocana. The nine sectored Vajra world as preserved in Japan today is found in Chinese and Japanese Buddhist iconography. Indian origins supposedly favored a six sectioned version. The nine sections of the Vajra mandala are analogous to the Taoist Lo-shu magic square, a nine-segmented chart that is model for the Chinese temple, walled city, and the ancient Taoist sacred dance called "The Steps of Yu" (禹步). The two mandala became part of a systematic four-fold ritual meditation, necessary to the initiation and ordination of a tantric Buddhist priest. Whether this system was found in China and brought back to Japan, or developed by the holy monks who brought Tantric Buddhism to China between 803-845 CE, is warmly debated by modern scholars. It's purpose is to unite the meditator with Vairocana Buddha in the posture of Vipasyana or "empty center" meditation.

Some scholars believe that forms of Tantric Buddhism first reached Japan by 752 A.D., when the Chinese monk Ganjin came to the Nara court and received a warm hero's welcome. The monks Kukai and Saicho went to China fifty years later to study a form of Tantric Buddhist practice imported to China in the late 7th and early 8th centuries of T'ang dynasty China. These practices proved both pleasing and meaningful to the Japanese of the Heian period. Tendai Buddhism was especially influential in spreading a more devotional *bhakti* form of the Goma, while the Shingon sect of Kukai practiced the more powerful *siddhi* exorcistic form of the fire rite. The Shingon Goma and its founder Kukai have been widely studied and appreciated abroad, while the quiet devotional monks of Mt. Hiei, the Tendai sect, kept their esoteric Goma fire rite on the aloof heights of the sacred mountain.

The Tantric rituals brought back to Japan by Kukai (Kobodaishi) had a much more profound effect on Heian period Japan than did those of Saicho. The monks of Mt. Hiei felt inferior to the monks trained by Kukai on Mt. Koya. At first Kukai shared his secrets with Saicho's followers, but as Shingon political power grew, the Tendai monks no longer shared the secrets brought back to Japan by Kukai. The monk Ennin, third master of Mt. Hiei, traveled to China in 835 and spent ten years studying Tantric Buddhist ritual on Mt. Wutai and in Ch'ang-an City, until the Huang Chao rebellion in 845-847 and the persecution of Buddhism in China forced him to return to Kyoto. The Goma and other tantric rites brought back by Ennin emphasized the *Susiddhi* and the Heart Sutras, and therefore were spiritually quite different from the religious methods of Kukai based on the *Risshyo-Naya Sutra*. The Tendai Goma used today reflects these differences, born in the spiritual milieu of Heian period Japan.

Even though the Tendai and Shingon Goma rites seem to be the same in structure, the Tendai rites are in fact different in content and goals. Tendai tends to lay more importance on devotion, symbolized by the Lotus symbol, while Shingon derives power

from the emphasis on the Vajra thunder bolt symbol. This symbolic difference can be seen in the order in which the rituals are performed. Tendai performs the Lotus meditation before the Vajra mandala rite, while Shingon places Vajra before Lotus.

The manner in which the legs are folded in the half lotus position at the beginning of the Tendai Goma also illustrates this difference. The left leg, which stands for Vajra, is placed over the right leg, which stands for Lotus, in the Tendai fire rite. Thus the left foot which stands for power is burned away, while the right foot, devotion, is preserved and protected from the fire. The Shingon monks usually place the right leg over the left when performing their version of the Goma. These and other subtle differences, as well as the content and style of the eidetic (moving) visualizations make the two forms of Goma quite different in style and in spirit.

Tendai Buddhism practiced on Mt. Hiei had a deep and profound influence on later Japanese Buddhism. All of the reformation sects, (Japan experienced a religious reformation 400 years prior to Europe, during the 12-13th century Kamakura period) represented break-aways from the parent Tendai organization. Dogen who later founded Japanese Zen Buddhism, Nichiren, Honen who founded Pure Land, and Shinran who founded the popular Jodo Shinshu were all trained on Mt. Hiei, and learned there how to perform the Goma. All rejected this complicated rite as something to be left aside in the religious reformation. Yet the Goma continues until today to be popular in Japan as a means of exorcism, prayer for blessing, and a form of disciplined devotion.

The Goma rite presented here is representative of the Tendai tradition, as it is practiced today and taught on Mt. Hiei, Kyoto. The translation is sometimes literal, and sometimes interpretative, according to the oral instructions of the Mt. Hiei teachers. The mudra hand symbols, and mantra chants, as well as the visualizations and meditations which accompany the translation, are taken from manuals used on Mt. Hiei. The author-translator was required to live as a monk and perform the Goma a total of thirty-six times before being granted permission to translate the text. The teachings of the Goma are ordinarily given by the Ajari-masters only after the postulant has received the *tokudo* rite of initiation and undergone the sixty day *shugyo* trial with a Hieizan master.

Only after learning the *Ju-hachi Do* Eighteen Path meditation, (the introductory rite which always precedes the Goma), and practicing the lotus World and Vajra World meditations, will the Ajari master teach the pupil how to perform the Goma. Following the sixty day *shugyo* period of intense trial and instruction, the novice is given a *kancho* ordination and licensed to perform ritual when called upon to do so for the people, or for his or her own devotional practice. Some monks choose to continue on for a hundred day trial, and others follow the thousand day "return to the mountain peak" trial, during which time thirty kilometers are run daily for three months over a seven year period, and the monk does not eat or drink for nine whole days.

The translator underwent the sixty day training in 1980 with the Ajari master Ikuta Koken, abbot of Ryu-o Ji on Mt. Hiei, and head of the Bishamondo temple, Yamashina, Kyoto. The training and preparation continued until 1985, when the Lotus-womb Mandala (Taizo-kai) and Vajra mandala (Kongo-kai) meditations were learned, and the translation

work begun. With a grant from the Japan Foundation in support of the project, a translation of the Taizo-kai Lotus-womb World meditation, and the Kongo-kai Thunder World meditation, was completed, with notes explaining the siddham sanskrit seed words and meditations passed on orally by the Ajari masters. The following pages represent a summary of the translations (published separately, under the title *Fire, Lotus, Vajra: the meditations of Tendai Tantric Buddhism*, Delhi: Scholar's Press, 1990), in order to give an understanding of the tantric meditation process, and a glimpse of the beautiful art that accompanies its practice in a popular, usable form.

The meditative rites described below are based upon the following works, used by the monk-instructors of Mt. Hiei: 1) the *Kokuyaku Seikyo Daikei*, four volumes, Tokyo: Kokusho Kankokai; 2) the four volume ritual manuals of the Honman sect, entitled *Juhachi-Do, Taizo-kai, Kongo-kai*, and *Goma Ku Shiki*, woodblock photo-offprint, Mt. Hiei; and 3) the *Shido Gyoki Shiso*, Anou sect, Mt. Hiei, Kyoto. A fourth set of instructions published by the Sanmai sect of Mt. Hiei were also referred to, but not used in the present presentation. These special volumes are printed and sold to the monks who come to Mt. Hiei to study and practice Tantric paths to Buddhist enlightenment.

A special word must be added here on the meaning of the term tantric, or "esoteric" Buddhism. All of the details of the four rituals, the Eighteen Path Mandala, the Lotus World, the Vajra World, and the Goma Fire Rite summarized here are taken from my larger volume on Tantric meditation published in India. There are no secrets, no "esoteric" teachings that cannot be bought and studied separately from the Ajari masters. Just as one cannot study nuclear physics without a competent instructor, or learn to drive a car without instructions, so too the Tantric rites require a person trained in ritual to be performed properly. The making of tofu (bean curd cakes), driving a car, learning to sew a dress or suit, are skills that must be learned from a teacher. This volume, therefore, is an introduction to a practice that must be experienced and visualized to be mastered.

It must not be thought that the Tantric rites are so secret that no one but a chosen few may learn them. One may approach the monks of Mt. Hieizan, pay a fee, and learn to perform the rites much as enrolling in any other sort of school. Tantric Buddhism therefore does not mean *secret* so much as *physical*, that is, the rites must be learned by physically doing them. This is because Tantric Buddhism by definition is the use of body (mudra or hand-dance), mantra (chant), and mandala (patterned meditation) to reach enlightenment. The prayer of *kenosis* or emptying mind of images and heart of desires is the goal of the holistic, total body tantric meditations.

In this sense, Tantric Buddhism is not secret or privileged information. It is no more secret or privileged than a university course on the New Testament in the hermeneutic tradition, or a night school course on wine tasting that must be paid for and attended for credit. The word *mikkyo* in Japanese, which bears the connotation of a "secret" teaching, does not so much mean privileged as it does orally transmitted instructions. The hand gestures (mudra), mantric chants (mantra), and eidetic visions (mandala) must be seen and practiced in order to be understood. In presenting these materials in class lectures, I sometimes use a videotape (*The Goma Fire Rite*, Univ. of Hawaii, Relig. Dept.)

in order to further enhance the experience of the Goma. But nothing can substitute for a trip to the sacred mountain, where the Goma can be seen as it is performed by the Ajari master.

In finding a teacher, the novice may choose from a variety of holy monks and masters. The Honman sect, Anou sect, and Sanmai sect are presently the most popular on Mt. Hiei, Kyoto. The Goma ritual below follows the instructions of the Rev. Ikuta Koken, who is an Ajari master in the devotional (bhakti) oriented Honman sect. The differences between this and the more simplified Anou and the Shingon influenced Sanmai sects are minimal. All three oral sources were used as references in presenting the Lotus, Vajra, and Goma rituals.

The Goma rite is divided into three major sections, namely: 1) before the fire; 2) during the fire; and 3) after the fire. The stages are easily recognized, since a fire is lit in the circular furnace-receptacle placed in the middle of the Goma altar at the beginning of stage two. The fire is no longer stoked and begins to go out at the beginning of stage three. The spectator may easily follow the rite by using this manual in conjunction with the performance, or simply watch the drama unfold visually.

The first stage consists of a lengthy purification and litany, followed by the Eighteen Path (eighteen stage) mandala meditation called *Ju-hachi Do*. This entire first section always precedes all major tantric rituals, including the Vajra World and Lotus World meditations, as we will see below. Scholars do not agree about the origins of the Eighteen Path mandala. Some say it comes from India, while others believe it was invented by Kukai after his return to Japan. Since elements of the rite are found in both Buddhist and Taoist rituals in China, a position between the two extremes seems to be appropriate. The Juhachi-do contains elements from India, China, and Japan.

The following structural outline will help the reader understand the order of Tendai Tantric ritual. The Ju-hachi Do meditation consists of a series of powerful eidetic visions in which the monk creates around him or herself pillars and walls of flames, inside of which are mentally constructed a sacred area where the meditations take place. Once constructed, the monk envisions a great ocean within the sacred area, in the center of which is a mountain. Atop the mountain is a pavilion, holding a sacred lotus throne. From the center of the lotus springs the seed word *Ah*. The word changes first into a lute, then a sword, and finally becomes the terrifying vision of Acala, surrounded in flames. Acala's stern face is a warning that the meditator must be pure and filled with feelings of compassion in order to proceed further. On the understanding of this vision of Acala rests the efficacy of the four subsequent meditations. The Lotus-womb world and the Vajra world meditations are performed within the structure of the Eighteen Path Mandala.

The definition of Tantric meditation as "eidetic vision" is understood through the vision of Acala as taught in the Eighteen Path mandala. The word *eidetic*, from the Greek word *eidos*, means a vision or image that is alive and moving. No two times is the vision ever the same. Part two of the Goma, the fire rite itself, uses powerful eidetic imagery to portray the various aspects of the Buddha as purifying, as father, mother, savior, cosmic, and folk centered, all are "burned away" in the Goma, a preparation for true union with the empty *sunya* void of T'ien-t'ai meditative practice.

The Goma fire ritual itself is begun by constructing a mandala of wood. The first three sticks, laid in the form of a triangle over the mouth of the furnace symbolize the three worlds, Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra mandala. Eight sticks laid four-by-four in a square represent the visible world and the eight directions. The final three sticks laid in a triangle atop the fire stand for my own body -- head, chest, and belly, or the intellect, will, and intuition. All of these images are to be burned away in the fires of the goma. The process of burning can be compared to the three stages of the spiritual life described in the writings of the western mystics. The writings of western mystics describe these stages in terms of purification, illumination, and union. Between the second illuminative stage and final union occurs a form of kenotic emptying, a "dark night" of the senses and intellect. During this period the intellect and will are emptied or darkened. The process within the Goma of burning away images and desires, symbolized by the offerings and the sticks of wood, is analogous to the apophatic or emptying process of the mystic experience. Thus the Goma is truly a form of mystic kenosis, i.e., a prayer of total self-emptying.

The Tendai Goma fire rite is composed of six meditations, or eidetic "moving" visualizations which are burned away in the flames. As each image is envisioned, the four offerings to the right side of the altar, representing bad deeds, and the six offerings in the center of the altar representing good deeds, are thrown into the flames. Both good and bad deeds are a hindrance to true awakening. The twelve inch long sticks of wood, representing the twelve nidhanas, or causes of recycling desires, are added to the flames. Thus the Goma burns away will and intellect, leaving nothing behind, not even ashes, in the mental imagery of the meditating monk. The images are as follows:

1. Agni, the image of Buddha as fire (see p. 22).
2. Butsugen Bomu, i.e., Buddha Locana (see p. 23).
3. Usnisa/The white-robed Tara (Kannon) (p. 24).
4. Acala and Vairocana together (p. 26).
5. The Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds (p. 27).
6. Acala surrounded by the twelve deities of ancient Vedic India (p. 30).

When the six sets of offerings have been completed, and the visions burned away in the flames, a seventh meditation called "entering samadhi" is performed. The practitioner sees her/his heart, the heart of all sentient being, and Vairocana, as one. Once emptied of all selfish hindrances, mental images, and desires, the life of the devotee can be given to acts of true compassion for others. Compassion is the test of true union with the non-dual, transcendent. If the meditator does not spend the rest of his or her life caring for the good of others, the text warns, the Goma, Lotus, and Vajra meditations were in vain.

In the Tendai version of the meditations, the Lotus-womb mandala is first performed by the meditator, in order to totally purify the inner self, and fill the body with the image of Acala and Vairocana. Once that Vairocana has been "locked" in the heart, the meditator then performs the Vajra meditation, in which all of the benefits of the Lotus world are given away. One steps into the Lotus world in a clockwise motion, and gives away

the merits and visions of the Vajra world in a counter-clockwise motion. Once that the interior has been emptied of Lotus and Vajra, then all of the visions are burned away by the fires of Agni in the Goma. Since the Goma is frequently seen throughout Japan, while Lotus and Vajra are preserved for the top of the sacred mountain, we present the Goma first in these pages, and save the beautiful pictures and visions of the two hidden mandala for the later sections of the presentation.

The art work found in this volume was prepared for publication by the wonders of Hewlett-Packard scanjet, an IBM/AT motherboard with add-ons from many sources, WS2000+ word processor, and the beautiful 10 pt. Times-Roman font of HP Laserjet. The wood block prints were provided by Bishamondo temple, Yamashina, Kyoto, courtesy of the Rev. Ikuta Koken. The kindness and generosity of the Rev. Ara Ryokan made the research and publication possible. The photos of the various mandala are from 16th century paintings preserved in the archives of the Bishamondo temple, one of the few collections of Tendai art preserved from the ravaging fires of Odo Nobunaga in 1571. The Rev. Haba Jion of Tokyo, The Rev. Keishin Taki, director of the Tendai central offices in Sakamoto, lake Biwa, the Rev. Monzeki Umeyama, and many others helped the publication of this volume, for which I am very grateful.

The original text of the Goma was written in siddham sanskrit seed words and Chinese, with Japanese katagana written beside the sanskrit in order to facilitate pronunciation. In each case, the meaning of the Sanskrit or the Chinese is indicated by the accompanying Japanese notes and explanation. We have chosen not to give the Sanskrit pronunciation or diacritical marks in this interpretation. The practitioner must learn to pronounce the words in the Japanese manner when performing the Goma under the directions of a master on Mt. Hiei. The complete version of the text, published by Scholar's Press, Delhi, provides all of the mantra used in the Kongo-kai, the Taizo-kai, and the Goma ritual meditations (see above). The Japan Foundation Grant which has provided for the preparation of this volume also includes the forthcoming translations of the above three works. For further study of the two mandalas, see the definitive work of Adrian Snodgrass, *The Matrix and Diamond World Mandalas in Shingon Buddhism*, New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1988, Two Volumes, with illustrations. The pioneer work of Ryujun Tajima, *Les Deux Grands Mandalas et la Doctrine de l'Esoterisme Shingon*, Tokyo/Paris: 1959, and Taiko Yamasaki's *Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, Boston: Shambala, 1988, sensitively translated by Cynthia and Richard Peterson, are also quite helpful.

I am very grateful to the many people who helped prepare this volume. The Sanskrit seed words and English romanization can be found in the larger volume published by Prof. Lokesh Chandra, the Culture Press, Delhi, India. An earlier version of the text was edited and typed for printing by Donna Bair. The oral instructions and patience of Rev. Ikuta Koken made the translation a possibility, along with the gentle kindness of the Ozasu Yamada Ettai, head of Tendai Buddhism, who encouraged the completion of this project. Whatever errors and inaccuracies are found, are solely the translator's fault. The Goma, Lotus, and Vajra meditations presented in this volume will, it is hoped, prove helpful for interfaith and cultural understanding.

I. THE MEDITATION ON FIRE

Section 1. Purification

I. Initial Purification.

The following are performed before entering the altar room. Using ordinary tap water, cleanse the hands and the mouth. Put on clean clothing, including white underwear (symbolizing purity), grey monk's clothes, and the yellow robe worn over the left shoulder called *kesa*. Holding the *kesa* (yellow robe) in the left hand. With the right hand form the Wind-Fist Mudra, i.e., fold the thumb into the palm and bend the four fingers down over it. Move the hand toward the *kesa* three times, imagining that purifying water is sprinkled on it. Recite each time "Om, be cleansed, svaha!" Then tie the *kesa* over the left shoulder, symbolically covering the left hand, which in India is considered to be impure, and chant: "Om! don the pure Vajra robe, Hum!"

II. Perform the goshimbo mudra to purify the body:

A. Purify the Three Sources of karmic activity, mind, mouth, and body. To do this, form the *Gassho* Joined-Hands Mudra, as follows: place the hands before the chest with the palms pressed together and recite:

Om! May the self arising,

All dharmas, and my nature be purified! Kham!



B. *Butsu-bu Samaya*: Purify the Buddha World mudra. Form the Buddha world mudra: place the hands before the chest with the palms facing each other, the fingers pointed upward. Allow the bases of the palms, the tips of the thumbs and the little, ring, and forefingers to touch. Keep the tips of the middle fingers slightly apart, thereby forming the shape of a partially-opened lotus. Recite :

Om! Tathagata, be cleansed, Svaha!



C. *Rengei-bu Samaya*: Purify the Lotus World mudra. Form the Rengei (Lotus) mudra: Keeping the bases of the palms and the tips of the thumbs and little fingers together, open out the middle and forefingers to represent a fully-opened lotus and recite:

Hail! Lotus World, be cleansed, Svaha!

D. *Kongo-bu Samaya*: Purify the Vajra World mudra. Form the Vajra Mudra: With backs of palms together, little fingers and thumbs intertwined, recite:

Om! Vajra World, be cleansed, Svaha!



E. *Hi-ko go-shin*: Armor protects the body. Form the Armor Mudra: With palms facing each other, little and ring fingers intertwined, middle fingers extended and touching at tips, forefingers extended and slightly bent, thumbs parallel and touching, press the "five places" (belly, heart, mouth, left shoulder, right shoulder, head) and recite:

Om! Vajra fire, protect me, Svaha!



III. Enter the Hall while holding the Beads and the Vajra.

A. Preparing to Enter the Hall: at the entry way form the Three-Pronged Vajra Mudra: Press the tip of the little finger into the palm with the tip of the thumb, extending the ring, middle, and forefingers. Make a counter-clockwise circular motion three times, then a clockwise circular motion three times, each time reciting

Om kiri kiri vajra, Hum! Phat!



Picture within one's heart a moon one inch in diameter. In the center of the moon visualize a lotus. In the center of the lotus place the Sanskrit letter *Ah* (ॐ). Expand the lotus and place it between you and the altar.

B. Purification by Water: At the entry way, dip a twig (if available) or three fingers into the holy water on the right and touch them to the body three times, reciting each time:

Om amirite Hum Phat!

(Om! Sweet dew of immortality, Hum! Cleanse me!)

C. Enter the Hall. Snap the fingers of the right hand three times, reciting "Hum, Hum, Hum." Step over the smoking elephant-shaped incense burner, right foot first, seeing all of the Buddhas of the Dharma world welcome my entrance. The incense and the light coming from the Buddha's wisdom eye cleanses all my impurities.

Om! Light piercing eyes, purify me, Um! Phat!

D. Proceed to the Front of the Buddha Altar. Enter the room, picturing one's self to tread across the petals of the large lotus placed there by the imagination. Recite:



I have come from infinite past worlds, eternally passing through this world of life and death. So many good and evil deeds have I committed, they are without number. As I stand before Acala I empty my heart. Just as the Buddhas of the past have repented, I too now repent and seek to avail myself of their power. I do so in order to purify and save all sentient beings. By this great vow may their impurities, as well as my own, be cleansed.



E. *Jo Sango*: Repeat the mantra for purifying the Three Karmic actions, as in II.A above. With palms pressed together, recite:

Om! May the self arising, my nature, and all the Dharms be purified, Kham!

F. Bow to Acala, (Fudo Myo-o), seen standing by the altar. Place palms together, then kneel with palms facing upward and touch the "five places" (forehead, two palms, two knees) to the floor. While doing so, recite:

I take refuge in and honor *honzon* worthy, the holy one, the supremely holy, supremely compassionate, Lord Acala. By his power we achieve enlightenment.

G. Sit at the Goma altar in Half-Lotus Position. Climb onto the cushion directly in front of the Goma altar. Sit cross-legged with the left leg (symbolizing the vajra) over the right (symbolizing the lotus). Straighten the clothes. Take the lids off the incense burner and the water containers.

IV. *Use powdered Incense, to purify oneself.*

To purify the self, take a pinch of incense from the box of powdered incense at the left of the altar, and rub it between the hands. Take another pinch and touch it to the lips, and then rub some on the chest. Recite "*So ken to gi*." See all five places (belly, heart, two shoulders, and mind) as empowered and purified by the power of Acala, when reciting the mantra.

V. Burn Grain Incense.

A. Using the forefinger, the middle finger, and the thumb, take a pinch of grain incense from the box to the left of the altar, and place it in the middle incense bowl on the altar. Do this three times. Recite inwardly:

May the fragrance of this incense purify and fill the
Dharma world in ten directions, by Tathagata's power.

B. Next place a pinch of the grain incense in the hand-held incense burner, and repeat the silent prayer, as above.

VI. *Perform the Goshimbo* as in step II. A-E, above.

A. Purify the three sources of karmic action, mind, mouth, and body. B. Purify the Buddha World (mind). C. Purify the Lotus World (heart). D. Purify the Vajra World (belly).

E. Don Acala's Armor to protect the body.

VII. *Purify the incense and water.*



Hold the prayer beads in the left hand, and the vajra in the right hand; run the beads through the fingers forty-seven times outwards and fifty-four times towards the self, while chanting "Om kiri kiri basara um hatta." (Om, Vajra light purify! Hum! Phat!). See the vajra light purify the entire cosmos.

VIII. *Water Purification.*



A. Purify the *Aka* Water with red and white light. There are two water bowls and two wooden water-sticks to the left of the altar-furnace. Take the stick to the left with the right hand and dip it into the water bowl on the left. Visualize two colored flames in the water: red (representing *Ram* རྩེད, the male aspects of the Buddha) and white (representing *Bam* རྩེད, the female aspects of the Buddha). With a circular motion mix the two colors, three times counter-clockwise and three times clockwise, reciting "Ram Bam" each time. See the colors blend into a bright pink purifying light.



B. Purify the entire cosmos with water.

1. Purify the Self: dip the same water-stick into the water and touch it to the forehead three times, reciting each time *Om amirite um hatta*.

2. Purify the San-Tan (Three Worlds): move the stick horizontally before you from left to right, reciting *Om amirite um hatta*, once to purify heaven, slightly lower to purify the earth, and lower still to purify the underworld.

3. Purify the Offerings: pass the stick three times left to right over the offerings, each time reciting "Om amirite um hatta."

4. Purify the Goma Hall, while reciting "Om amirite um hatta" only once. Tap the stick on the rim of the water bowl nine times to purify the eight directions and the center.

IX. *Envision the Offerings purified with vajra lightning.*

Make a fist with your left hand and place it on the hip. With the right hand pick up the vajra and circle it in the air, three times counter-clockwise and three times clockwise, reciting "Om! Kili-kili Vajra Lightning, Hum! Phat!"

X. *Purify by Clapping the Vajra Thunder Hands.*

Clap the hands three times, reciting "Om! Vajra Clap, Hum! Phat !" (Lit., that which follows vajra lightning, thunder clap).

XI. Purify by Snapping the Fingers.

To drive away all evil, snap the fingers of the right hand three times, moving from above the left to the right knee while reciting "Om! Kili Kili Evil be gone, Hum! Phat!"

XII. Expel Impurity with the triple prong vajra.



Make a Triple-Pronged Vajra Mudra with both hands by placing thumb over the tip of the little finger and extending the fore, middle, and ring fingers outward. Place the right hand on the hip and move the left hand in a circular motion in front of the chest, three times counter-clockwise and three times clockwise, reciting "Om! Kili kili Vajra, Hum! Phat!"

XIII. Purify again with Water.

A. Pick up the right side water-stick with the left hand and dip it into the purifying water. Dab the water onto the right palm beneath the ring finger. Put down the water-stick. Press the thumb of the right hand to the base of the ring finger and fold the four fingers over the thumb. Do the same for the left hand, folding the fingers down over the thumb.



B. Cleanse the Buddha world: Keeping the hands in the above mudras, place the left hand on the hip and hold the right hand before the head. Perform a knocking motion toward the head, and recite "Om! Enlightened Benevolent Ones, Jyah!" three times.

C. Cleanse the Lotus world: Keeping the left hand on the hip, hold the right hand before the chest and again with a the knocking motion recite three times "Om! Spotless Ones, Jyah!"

D. Cleanse the Vajra World: Keep the left hand on the hip; hold the right hand before the belly and with a knocking motion toward self recite three times "Om! Vajra grip, Jyah!"



XIV. Purify the cosmos with Vajra Light.

A. Purify the external Buddha World. Rub the palms together, spreading the water from the right hand to the left. Place the thumb of each hand over the fingernail of the little finger, extending the three other fingers, like a vajra trident. Holding the right hand upward with the elbow bent and the palm facing forward, touch the three extended fingers of the left hand to the right elbow. Circle the air three times clockwise with the right hand, reciting: "Om! Vajra light purify the deva-spirit world with thy power, Hum! Phat!"

B. Purify the external Lotus World. Using the same hand positions, circle the right hand clockwise three times, reciting "Om! Brightest light, illumine the great (Lotus) blessing, Svaha!"

C. Purify the external Vajra World. Using the same hand positions, circle the right hand clockwise three times, reciting "Om! Vajra light, protect us, Svaha!"

XV. Purify the cosmos with the Vajra Deed Bodhisattva Mudra.

Form the Vajra Deeds Bodhisattva Mudra: press down the little finger of each hand with the thumb. Cross the wrists, right over left. Perform a circling motion three times counterclockwise, reciting "Om! Vajra Kharma, ken!"



XVI. Kongo Wheel Mudra.

Perform the Kongo Wheel Empowering Mudra: Place the palms together, intertwining the ring and little fingers. Place the middle fingers over the index fingers, with the thumbs together and recite:

In the name of the Three Worlds, Nam! And all the
Tathagata who dwell therein, Nam! May the spotless,
Purest great wheel, the eternal, unmoved vajra, purify
the three causes (mind, mouth, body) and effects
(words, desires, deeds) of evil; by the power of thy
triple wisdom victorious, Tram! Svaha!

XVII. Kigan: Prayers of Petition.

A. Take up the incense thurible, the five-pronged vajra, and the beads in the left hand. With the right hand hold the instrument to strike the bell.

1. Strike the bell and recite the following prayer:

In order that the dharma may forever be honored,
benefiting both man and heaven, protecting the
children of the Buddha, burning away all sin,
giving birth to good, bringing about true
enlightenment for the benefit of the entire Dharma
world equally, we invoke the following.



2. Envision Vairocana Buddha and recite:

Hail Great Vairocana Buddha! Strike the gong.

3. Envision the Acala and recite:

Hail Great Honzon Worthy Acala! (gong)

XVIII. Invoking the Spirit World.

Recite the following prayer to the spirits: "Let us begin by honoring Brahma, Indra, Prthivi, the earth spirits, and all the spirits of the three worlds--heaven, earth, and underworld. May they protect all the children of the Buddha, including myself, blessed by the protective star-sign under which I was born. May all the cities of the kingdom be at peace. May all the great spirit forces protect our sacred mount Hiei, bring peace, and protect tantric Buddhism. With the great Spirit of the Red Mountain (a Shinto shrine on Mt. Hiei) may they exorcise the demon kings, the underworld officials, the masses suffering in hell, the great ocean dragon spirits, the yaksa and asura demons. To the utmost may those who inhabit the empty Dharma World, those who follow the two teachings (the true way and the expedient way), the heavenly spirits, and the earthly forces, may they all take joy in the Dharma and be filled with subtle light, greatly respecting the Sangha. May all spirits cross over to the shore of wisdom, i.e., *prajna-paramita* enlightenment.

Recite the phrase *Hanya shingyo*, ring the gong, and again say: "By the virtue of the Prajna Paramita Sutra...gone, gone, gone to the other shore. Arrived at the other shore. Enlightened. So be it. The Great Heart Sutra!" (ring gong.)

XIX. Name and summons all the Spirits.

With beads, vajra, and incense burner in the left hand, and the mallet for striking the gong in the right hand, recite:

For the sake of the great founders of Tantric Buddhism,
Nagarjuna, Pu-k'ung, Hui-kuo, the three national heroes,
(Kobodaishi, Denkyodaishi, Ennin, or Jikakudaishi) that
Their vows may be full and complete,

In the name of Vairocana, (gong)

And the holy one, Acala. (gong)

XX. Prayers of Petition.

The meditator takes the mallet for striking the gong in the right hand, and the incense thurible in the left, and recites the following petitions, striking the gong each time a Buddha or Bodhisattva is invoked:

For the emperor of China, may he live 10,000 years.

Hail, Great Vairocana Buddha. (gong)

Hail, Honzon worthy Acala. (gong)

For the Emperor of Japan, may his desires be fulfilled.

Hail Great Vairocana Buddha. (gong)

Hail Honzon Worthy Acala. (gong)

For the Great Palace Tree (i.e., the Shogun) peaceful rule!

Hail Great Vairocana Buddha. (gong)

Hail Honzon Worthy Acala. (gong)

For the four seas, fair winds, bumper crops, and peace for the people!

Hail Great Vairocana Buddha. (gong)

Hail Honzon Worthy Acala. (gong)

May all the mountains be at peace, free from disaster, and filled with joy.

May the disciples of popular and tantric Buddhism be filled with learning and progress, bringing to fulfillment the path of the Buddha.

Hail Great Vairocana Buddha. (gong)

Hail Honzon Worthy Acala. (gong)

May I, servant of the Buddha, have all the impurities and hindrances of my karmic deeds burned away and my good and compassionate desires fulfilled, and my interior at peace; may all sentient being [through thy power] be filled with joy, one with the Dharma, and equally filled with blessing.

Hail Great Vairocana Buddha. (gong)

Hail Honzon Worthy Holy Acala. (gong)

Hail Buddha Locana Bodhisattva. (gong)

Hail Ekaksara-Usnisa-Chakra. (gong)

Hail Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. (gong)

Hail Kundali Light King. (gong)

That all sentient beings choose the Dharma path.

Hail Great Vairocana Buddha. (gong)

Hail Honzon Worthy Holy Acala. (gong)

Hail Vajrasattva Worthy. (gong)

Hail Ekaksara-Usnisa-Chakra. (gong)

Hail Manjusri Bodhisattva. (gong)

Hail Sarva Tri-Ratna (Three Treasures) (gong)

XXI. Offering the gifts for all sentient beings.

Continue to hold beads, vajra, and incense burner in the left hand and the mallet to strike gong in right hand. See all of the leaves, flowers, and other items as universal offerings. Chant the following three times: "May these liturgies respectfully be offered that all might eternally be one with the three treasures--the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha."

Recite the following verses:

May all those here present, each worthy, kneel in
obeisance, respectfully take up fragrant flowers, and
according to Dharma-custom present them as offerings.
May these clouds of incense and flowers spread everywhere in
the ten directions as offerings, nourishing all the Buddhas,
Buddha avatars, and Bodhisattvas. May the innumerable voices
of those receiving these clouds of incense and flowers be
heard by all. May these clouds of incense and flowers be
as a great pavilion of light, spreading out to the cosmos
without limits. We present boundless, limitless offerings to
the Buddha, offered respectfully on behalf of all beings.

Put down the incense burner.

XXII. Chant in Honor of the Lotus World.

A. Form the Vajra Mudra. Hold the beads and the single pronged vajra between the palms with the fingers slightly intertwined. Uplift the heart and in the imagination see the following Buddhas one by one. Picture the self bowing to the ground at each name.

1. Envision Vairocana above the center of the mandala. Recite:

Hail Purest Dharma Body Vairocana Buddha.

2. Envision Ratnadhvaja in the East. Recite:

In the Eastern Quarter Ratnadhvaja Buddha.

3. Envision Samkusumita-Raja in the South. Recite:

Hail in the southern quarter Samkusumita Buddha.

4. Envision Amitabha in the West. Recite:

Hail in the western quarter, Buddha of Eternal Life.

5. Envision Divyadundubhi Megha Nirghosa in the North. Recite:

Hail in the northern quarter, drum of heaven, thunder sounding Buddha.

6. Envision Samantabhadra (Fugen) in the Southeast. Recite:

Hail in the southwest, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva.

7. Envision Manjusri in the Southwest. Recite:

Hail in the southwest, Manjusri Bodhisattva.

8. Envision Avalokitesvara (Kannon) in the Northwest. Recite:

Hail in the northwest, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva.

9. Envision Maitreya in the Northeast. Recite:

Hail in the northeast, Maitreya Bodhisattva.

10. Envision Buddha Locana (Butsugen Bu Mo) below center. Recite:

Hail Buddha Locana Bodhisattva.



B. Continue performing the Kongo Mudra and recite the following three times:

We offer our respects to the Great Mandala Lord,
the Holy Source of Light, the Great Enlightened One [Acala].

C. Continue performing the Vajra Mudra and recite the following:

We offer our respects to the four great Light Kings
(Trailokyavijaya, Kundali, Yamantaka, and Vajrayaksa), the
enlightened ones, the great enlightened ones. We offer our
respects to the greater and lesser Isvara, the stars of the
twelve stems, of the twenty-eight constellations, and of all
the phenomenal heavens. We offer our respects to the Three
World Mandala (the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra Worlds).



XXIII. *Sudden Awakening.*

A. Form the awakening mudra by linking the little fingers and pointing the forefingers outwards, allowing them to touch at the tips. Awaken all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas just envisioned before you by reciting "Om! Vajra awaken! Hum!"

B. Form the Vajra Joined-Hands Mudra: Interlace the tips of the four fingers and cross the thumbs. Invoke the Three Worlds, and purify the altar again by reciting "Hail, Three worlds, all the tathagata therein, Nam! Spotless, most pure, by the great cakra wheel, always unchanging, ceaselessly purify the three causes and effects of evil, by thy triple wisdom fulfilling this purifying act, victory thine! Tram! Svaha!"

XXIV. *Announcing the Petitions.*

With the left hand, pick up the five-pronged vajra, beads, and incense burner. With the right hand pick up the gong mallet and strike the gong once. Recite the following:

With upright hearts we make our vows: We only beg Vairocana, Acala, and all their entourage -- the bright Acala with eight youths, the twelve great heavens, the triple and five-tiered worlds, all the worthies and myriad saints, the entire void dharma world, and all manifestations of the triple treasure -- may each one read these vows with us, each pronouncing the vows of compassion. May each come down to be here in this sacred place, to practice together the three tantra (of mind, mouth, and body). May the lost souls all benefit from these vows as we firmly commit ourselves to the (task) before us. May you (Acala) protect these children of the Buddha, including myself. May you wipe out all guilt of sin and give birth to deeds of good. May you grant us eternal blessing and health. Despite whatever oppression might occur, whatever misfortunes, whatever calamities, may you protect the weary who find the way hard and the weak who otherwise would not persevere. Let them all be fulfilled. May our homes be at peace and may all humanity be filled with joy, extending even to the whole world, benefiting all.

XXV. *Five Great Vows of the Bodhisattva.*

Continue to hold the incense burner, beads, and vajra in the left hand. Recite the following:

All sentient beings I vow to save.
All wisdoms and blessings I vow to practice.
All Dharma paths I vow to follow.

All Tathagata I vow to serve.
The highest enlightenment I vow to fulfill.
Help me, child of the Buddha, to accomplish these vows.

Section 2. *Ju-Hachi Do* The Eighteen Path Mandala Meditation

The first five steps constitute the Goshimbo, as in II.a-e, above:

I. *Purify the Three Sources of Karma, mind, mouth, and body.* With palms pressed together recite:

Om! May Self-arising, all Dharmas, and my nature be purified, Kham!

II. *Purify the Buddha World:* With hands formed as a partially-opened lotus, or hands open as a bowl, recite:

Om! Tathagata be cleansed, Svaha!

III. *Purify the Lotus World:* With hands formed as a fully-opened lotus, recite:

Om! Lotus be purified, Svaha!

IV. *Purify the Vajra World:* With backs of palms together, little fingers and thumbs inter-twined, recite:

Om! Vajra be purified, Svaha!

V. *Armor Protects the Body:* With palms facing each other, little and ring fingers inter-twined, middle fingers extended and touching at tips, forefingers extended and slightly bent, thumbs parallel and touching, press the "five places" (belly, heart, mouth, left shoulder, right shoulder, and head) and recite:

Om! Vajra flames, protect me, Svaha!

See protective flames envelope the body and void the mind.

VI. *Envision the Great Pillar of Earth.*

Form a mudra by interlocking the ring and middle fingers with the little and forefingers pointing outward and touching at the tips; let the thumbs point toward the body and also touch at the tips. Make a circular motion three times clockwise above the head, reciting:

Om! Kili kili, Vajra, Great Vajra, firmly
cover me with thy net, Hum! Phat!

See the mudra become a great vajra pillar, flowing out from the hands, spiraling upward to the extent desired. It becomes like a great beacon of fire. Vajra lightning surrounds and protects the meditator as the net of vajra flames fills the meditation area.

VII. *Envision a Vajra Wall of thunder and lightning flames.*

Open out the thumbs and turn the hands until the palms face inward. In a horizontal plane in front of the meditator, move the hands in a circular motion, clockwise. Recite three times:

Om! Firm, so firm, Vajra wall surround me, Hum! Phat!

As the mantra is recited, the mudra becomes a great vajra weapon, from which flows a measureless vajra flame, encircling the entire altar. The fire-lightning hardens into a wall.

VIII. *Dojo kan:* Visualization of the *Ah* Sacred Seed Word.



A. Form the Contemplation Mudra by placing the hands in the lap, palms upward, with the right hand over the left and the thumb tips touching. Directly in front visualize a great net spread over the vajra wall. Inside this net is a great ocean. In the center of the ocean is a precious mountain. On top of the mountain is an altar. In the center of the altar is a great eight-petalled lotus, on top of which there is a lion throne. On the throne is a seven-storied precious tower, surrounded by pillars bedecked with heavenly embroidered curtains, decorated with jewels and clouds of gems and bells. There are tapestries and banners on the walls. Everywhere can be heard the tinkling sound of chimes. It is grand and awe-inspiring.



On all sides, clouds of incense arise. Petals of flowers fall like gentle rain. Beautiful music can be heard. Precious viands of heavenly drink and food are laid out. A bright red Mani pearl sheds light all around. In the midst of the pavilion there is a great mandala, at the heart of which is the seed word *Ah* [ॐ]. The seed word becomes a stone piba (lute). Above the stone lute is the seed word *Kam* [ॐ]. The *Kam* becomes a great sword. The great sword turns into Acala. His color is bluish black. His face is round and full. In his right hand he grasps the sword of wisdom and in his left hand he holds a coiled rope. He is wrapped in measureless, swirling flames which give birth to samadhi. Though his countenance is extremely angry, infinite compassion flows from his heart.

B. Offering Food to Acala. Form the mudra by placing the palms together and folding down the middle fingers. The thumbs should be parallel. The tips of the forefingers, ring fingers, and little fingers should be touching. Raise and lower the touching forefingers seven times, reciting each time:

Om Vajra, born of the void, Koh!



Envision the boundless food offerings in the pavilion being offered to Acala. Form the Vajra Fist Mudra: Make a fist with each hand by placing the thumb under the tips of the other four fingers. Place the fists on the hips and recite:

Om! Vajra hand, Hum!



C. With the right hand pick up the single-pronged vajra. Circle it in the smoke from the incense burner three times in front of the heart, thinking of it as a sun and reciting *Hum! Hum! Hum!* Raise it to the chest three times, while reciting the mantra. Pick up the vajra bell with the left hand. Place the right fist on the waist and recite *Om Vajra!* Ring the bell while reciting *Ken da um*. (Ring the bell nine times in the morning, seven times in the evening). Put down the bell. Touch the belly, heart, shoulders and forehead with right hand in Vajra Fist mudra.



IX. *Sending out three Chariots.*

With the palms held upward, intertwine the four fingers. Pass the thumbs outwards across the tops of the fingertips and back under the fingertips three times, reciting *Om toro toro um* each time. The mantra represents the sound of the chariot wheels which are sent forth to welcome the Buddha World, the Lotus World, and the Vajra World, respectively.

X. Inviting the Chariots to enter.

With the palms upward, intertwine the four fingers, and pass the thumbs towards the chest over the tops of the fingertips and back away under the fingertips three times. Picture each of the three mandala worlds directly in front of the self, waiting to come in. Recite the following mantra three times:

In the name of all Tathagata of the Three Worlds, Nam!

Om! blazing Vajra flames, Holy Acala,

All Boddhisattva, come, Svaha!



XI. Invite the Worthies inside the body of the meditator.

A. Leaving the fingertips intertwined, turn the hands over so that the fingertips are now pointing downward. Bring the bases of the palms together with the thumbs parallel to each other. Move the thumbs inward three times, reciting each time:

Om! Benevolent Buddha world, enter, Kyah!

Envision the mandala of the Buddha World to enter the head.



B. Keeping the hands in the same mudra, move only the left thumb tip inward three times, reciting each time:

Om! Pure Lotus world, enter, Kyah!

Envision the mandala of the Lotus World entering the chest.



C. Keeping the hands in the same mudra, move the right thumb tip inward three times, reciting each time:

Om! Vajra fire Holy Acala Great awakened, enter, Svaha!

Envision the mandala of the Vajra World entering the belly.



XII. Expel any evil that may have entered the body at this time.

A. Form the Three-Pronged Vajra Mudra with each hand: i.e., extend the forefinger, middle finger, and ring finger. With the tip of the thumb press down the little finger. Maintaining this mudra, place the right hand on the waist, and raise the left hand over the head and move it in a circle, three times counter-clockwise, then three times clockwise. Recite each time:

Om kili kili Vajra, Hum! Phat!

Envision a net covering self, keeping out all evil thoughts.



B. Using the same mudra, place the left hand on the waist. Raise the right hand, palm facing outward, and bend the fingertips three times to purify the three karmic actions, by the power of the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worthies. Recite each time:

Om! Made one, fulfill thy purifying vows in us, Svaha!



XIII. The Vajra Net.

Form the Vajra Net mudra: place the hands together, intertwine the middle fingers and fold them downward. The forefingers and little fingers extend and touch at the tips. The thumbs are parallel, tips touching the middle joint of the third finger. Maintaining this mudra, raise the hands above the head and move them circularly, clockwise, reciting each time:

Om! Vajra net, protect us on all sides, Hum! Phat!

Envision a Kongo net spreading over oneself and the altar, supported by the vajra wall and pillar.



XIV. Pavilion of Fire Mandala.

Build an imaginative fire which encloses the entire sacred area. Form a mudra by holding the hands in front, palms up, with the right hand resting lightly on the left palm. Envision a fierce fire spiraling out beyond the Vajra wall and filling the entire room. Recite:

Om! One with Agni-fire, Hum! Phat!



XV. Offer the Five Real Items to the left of the altar.

A. *Aka*: Pure Water. Pick up the bowl containing the water using the forefinger, middle finger, and thumb. Circle it in the smoke of the incense clockwise three times, then place it in the palm of the left hand. With the right hand form the Three-Pronged Vajra Mudra: the middle, fore, and ring fingers extend and the thumb presses down the little finger. Using this mudra, to the right of the bowl of water make a circular motion counterclockwise, blessing the water by saying *Om kiri kiri Vajra Hum! Phat!* Now hold the bowl between your palms with the four fingers extending upward and the thumbs touching.

Hold it at the level of the head and recite *Namaku samanda bodanam...* Hold it at the level of the heart and recite *Gya gya-na...* Hold it at the level of the belly and recite *Sama sama sowaka*. (In the name of all Buddhas, with the void made one! So be it, Svaha!) Recite inwardly "By the means of this purified water I wash away all the defilements of my body, never to turn away from my vows as a Bodhisattva. By this act I demonstrate my sincerity to fulfill these vows."

B. *Incense*. Pick up the bowl containing the incense using the forefinger, middle finger, and thumb. Circle it in the smoke of the incense clockwise three times, then place it in the palm of the left hand, as above. Now hold the bowl between the palms with the four fingers extending upward and the thumbs touching. Hold it at the level of the head, as above, and recite *Namaku samanda bodanam*. Hold it at the level of the heart and recite *Gya gya na...* Hold it at the level of the belly and recite *Sama sama sowaka*.

C. *Leaves*. Pick up the bowl containing the leaves, using the forefinger, middle finger, and thumb, as above. Circle it in the smoke of the incense clockwise three times, then place it in the palm of the left hand. Now hold the bowl between the palms with the four fingers extending upward and the thumbs touching. Repeat the triple offering, as above. Hold it at the level of the head and recite *Namaku samanda bodanam*. Hold it at the level of the heart and recite *Gya gya na...* Hold it at the level of the belly and recite *Sama sama sowaka*.

D. *Rice*. Pick up the bowl containing the rice using the forefinger, middle finger, and thumb. Circle it in the smoke of the incense clockwise three times, then place it in the palm of the left hand. Now hold the bowl between your palms with the four fingers extending upward and the thumbs touching. Hold it at the level of the head and recite *Namaku samanda bodanam*. Hold it at the level of the heart and recite *Gya gya na...* Hold it at the level of the belly and recite *Sama sama sowaka*.

E. *Fire*. Form the Fire Mudra with the right hand: press down the nail of the forefinger with the thumb. Press the ring and little fingers into the palm. Crook the middle finger. With the fingertips of the left hand touch the base of the right wrist, as if

holding up a torch. Hold this Fire Mudra at the level of the head and recite *Namaku samanda bodanam*. Hold it at the level of the heart and recite *Gya gya na...* Hold it at the level of the belly and recite *Sama sama sowaka*.

XVI. *Offer the Five Items again as Universal Symbols*. Instead of real, concrete items, a hand symbol or mudra is used to represent the offering of the five sense and consciousness, the six parameters, (paramitas) whereby the Bodhisattva attains Buddhahood: charity, precepts, perseverance, energy, meditation, and wisdom.

A. *Aka*: Pure Water Cleanses the Heart. The offering of symbolic water is lengthy, and includes the following meditations:

1. Form the Empty Palms Mudra: with palms upward and side by side, the outside edges of the little fingers and the palms touching, bend the fingertips toward oneself, with the thumbtip beneath the forefinger. Place the mudra at the level of the head, heart, and belly, reciting each time *Om kyamara sowaka*. (Om! Open, Lotus. Svaha!) See a lotus blooming in the heart.



2. Form the Eight-Petalled Lotus Mudra by placing the base of the palms together, extending the ring, middle, and forefingers, and allowing the tips of the little fingers and thumbs to touch. Hold this mudra at the level of the head, and envision oneself as offering a lotus to the Buddha World. Again recite *Om kyamara sowaka*. Hold this mudra at the level of the heart and offer a lotus to the Lotus World. Recite *Om kyamara sowaka*. Hold the mudra at the level of the belly and offer a lotus to the Vajra World. Recite *Om kyamara sowaka*.

3. Universal Offering to the entire Buddha World. Form the vajra mudra by intertwining the four fingertips and crossing the right thumb over your left. Silently think the following:



Welcome to all of the worthies who come here. Due to the original vow of (Amida) Buddha may you come down to this sacred area, take your preordained seats, and receive these symbolic offerings.




4. Many-tiered Great Mandala World. Form a mudra by intertwining the little and ring fingers of both hands. Allow the tips of the middle fingers to touch. The forefingers and thumbs are open. Move the mudra in a circle three times clockwise, and three times counterclockwise, seeing a great golden moon surrounding the self. Then touch the five places, i.e., the belly, heart, shoulders, throat, and head, while reciting: "Sealed by the Great Original Vow! Svaha!" Envision the power of the third light King Kundali protecting oneself from all forms of Siddhi powers and other impure spiritual forces.





Now repeat the Five Offerings in the form of symbolic mudra.


B. Symbolic offering of Powdered Incense. Place the right hand before oneself with the palm facing outward. With the left hand hold the right wrist. Visualize powdered incense being rubbed on the bodies of all the Worthies of the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds. Recite "In the name of all Buddhas may this incense purify all sentient beings. Svaha!"




C. *Keman*: Symbolic offering of Leaves and Flowers. Form the Keman flower mudra: place the palms upward with the little, ring, and middle fingers intertwined. Allow the forefingers to touch at the tips and the thumbs to rest by the sides of the forefingers. Visualize the hands as flowers being laid in front of the all the Buddhas. Recite "In the name of all Buddhas, may Great Compassion be born in all sentient beings, Svaha!" 

D. Symbolic offering of burning incense. Form the Burning-Incense Mudra: Place the palms upward with the backs of the fingertips of the little, ring, and middle fingers touching. The forefingers are extended and the thumbs rest beside them. Visualize incense smoke surrounding all the Buddhas of the three worlds and recite: "In the name of all Buddhas may this incense fill and purify the entire Dharma world. Svaha!" 

E. Symbolic offering of a Bowl of Rice. Form the Bowl of Rice Mudra by cupping the palms together with the little fingers flush and the other fingertips touching. The thumbs are flush with the palms. Visualize rice in your palms being offered to all the Buddhas of the three worlds and recite "In the name of all Buddhas, Arara Kyara, make this offering into a wondrous feast. Svaha!" 

F. A symbolic offering of Light. With the right hand form the Fire Mudra as in XV.E above. Visualize the middle finger as a flame extending outward to flood the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds with light. Recite "In the name of all Buddhas may the brilliant Tathagata light fill the great void. Svaha!" 

XVII. *General Offering of the gifts to the entire cosmos.*

A. Form the Clapsed-Hands Vajra Mudra: Place the palms together with the tips of the four fingers intertwined and the right thumb crossed over the left. Recite the following: "Today, I hereby offer to all the Buddhas these gifts. May they together purify the dust of the real world and the image-world. May the real world and the image-world be washed in the Dharma sea. In reality, all of these wonderful offerings are the Dharma World, the sea which washes away all impurities." 

Visualize the four Dharma bodies: the Phenomenal, Noumenal, the Noumenal-Phenomenal, and the Body Non-Hindered by Phenomena or Noumena. Picture the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds as being continuously nourished by these offerings.

B. The Empowering Mudra and Mantra. Form the clasped hands Kongo Mudra: Place the palms together with the tips of the four fingers intertwined and the right thumb crossed over the left. Recite "In the name of all Buddhas, Ken! (Wisdom of the Void). May we be born in the great void! Svaha!"

XVIII. *Entering Samadhi.*

A. In Praise of Acala. Using the same mudra as above, recite "In the name of all Buddhas and Bodhisattva! By the power of thy ordination (Acala) may compassion blossom in all sentient beings everywhere. Svaha!"

B. In Praise of the Four Types of Wisdom. Using the same mudra, recite "Om! Vajrasattva help us receive the vajra jewel, highest attainable vajra dharma, vajra song, vajra deeds. Svaha!" See Acala as having these four types of wisdom: Perfect Mirror Wisdom, All Things Equal Wisdom, Wondrous Perception, and Wisdom which Enlightens All Beings.

C. Enter Samadhi (A Symbolic Vision of Acala). Form the Samadhi Mudra: Place the hands on the lap with palms upward. Rest the left hand in the palm of the right and allow the thumbs to touch at the tips. See the heart as a great, round moon, above which is the word *Kam* (𑖅𑖟𑖩𑖫). The *Kam* becomes a sword. The moon and the sword fill the entire Dharma World, so that there exists only one great moon and one great sword. The sword becomes Acala. Bring the figure of Acala inside you, and allow his merits to become part of you. See that internally, Acala is filled with kindness and compassion, even though externally he manifests anger and fury. Envision that one's own body and the body of Acala are now one.



Section 3. Introduction to the Goma

I. *The Konpon-In and the Honzon-In mudra which are used in this step must be given by a master to his or her disciple.* The mantra to be recited is "In the name of all Vajras, Nam! O Great Fiery-Angry One! Destroyer of Evil! Hum! Trah! Tah! Kam! Mam!"

II. *Protecting Mudra.* Buddha Locana is here asked to protect the practitioner. Intertwine the little, ring, and middle fingers at the tips. Bend the forefingers and allow their tips to rest on the tips of your thumbs, which are parallel and flush. Raise and lower the tips of your forefingers, keeping them touching each other. Recite "Om Buddha Roshana! Svaha!"

III. *Summon Agni, The Vedic Spirit of Fire.*

Place the right hand in front of oneself, palm outward, with the thumb folded into the palm. Hold the right wrist with the left hand. Bend and straighten the forefinger of the right hand three times to summon Agni. Envision Agni coming as in the form of Vairocana (Buddha as sunlight). Recite "Om! Agni! Svaha."



IV. *Mudra used during the fire ritual.*

There are six different mudra that can be used at this point in the ritual, according to the number of segments that the monk or nun plan to use during the fire rite. The mudra and mantra shown here are used for a six step Goma of blessing and devotion (Kei Ai). The rite can have anywhere from three (a short service), to five (the standard Shingon service) or six mudra (Tendai practice) as described below. The first mudra declares the purpose for which the fire rite is offered.



Place the palms together and intertwine the ring fingers. Extend the little and middle fingers and allow them to touch at the tips. Extend the forefingers and allow them to remain open. The thumbs are placed parallel and flush. Recite "Om! Purify all obstacles to union in us, Oh Vajra! Svaha!"



V. *Mudra for Grasping the Beads.* Using both hands, grasp the beads between the thumb and ring finger of each hand. Move the beads through the fingers three times reciting each time "Om! made one with Vajra by these sacred (secret) words, Hum!"

Place the beads between the palms leaving the tassels hanging free. The meditator prays silently at this point, for his/her own private intentions. Recite: "Om! Great light shining from thy crown (O Vairocana). Svaha!"

VI. *Invocation of the Visions To Be Seen During the Goma.*

A. Four Invocations to the Buddha as sunlight, Vairocana (Dainichi Nyorai). Pick up the single-pronged vajra with the left hand. Place it between the thumb and palm. Hold the beads between the thumb and ring finger of each hand to perform the following incantations:

1. Run the beads through the ring fingers and thumbs ten times, each time reciting "Om bira um ken."

2. Run the beads through once, reciting "Om! Buddha Locana, Svaha!"

3. Run the beads through twice, reciting "Borom borom."

4. Run the beads through ten times, reciting "Namaku samanda basara nam senda makaroshana sowataya um tarata kam man." (For a translation, see #3.I above).



B. Mantra for the Goma which Blesses the community. Continuing to hold the single-pronged vajra between the thumb and palm of the left hand, run the beads through once, reciting "Om saruba haba dakana basara sowaka." (Pg. 1. Mantra #D).

C. Mantra for Agni, the Spirit of Fire. Running the beads through once, reciting "Om agyana ei sowaka." (Hail Agni! Svaha!) Visualize Acala with a red body, yellow hair, three eyes, and four arms. (N.b. Agni is here identified with Acala).

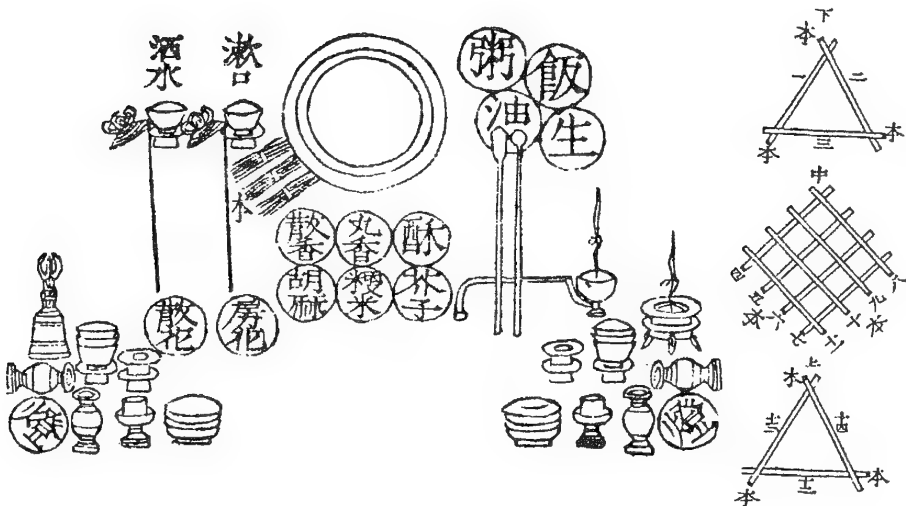
D. Mandala of the Northern Constellations (the Big Dipper and the Twelve Earthly Stems). Run the beads through once, reciting "Om gyara kei shu jibariya hara hatta juchi ramaya sowaka." Visualize Buddha Locana (Lord Ram) surrounded by the sun, moon, thunder, wind, and seven stars of the dipper.

E. The Twenty-Eight Constellations. Visualize the white-robed Tara (Kannon or Avalokitesvara with forty-two arms) while reciting "Om dakisha tara-niri sodani ei sowaka."

F. The Three Buddha Worlds Together. Visualize the three worlds, i.e., the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra mandala, and recite "Om asaha Svaha!"

G. Mantra of All the Heavens Together. Visualize the twelve spirits of the Vedic religion surrounding Acala. Recite "Om rokyo rokyo kyaraya sowaka."

The preparations are now complete, and the Goma is about to begin. The meditator uses the same process outlined above when beginning the Goma, the Lotus Mandala, and the Vajra Mandala meditations. In the following pages we will present 1) the meditations of the Goma Fire Rite; 2) the meditations of the Lotus Mandala, and 3) the meditations of the Vajra Mandala, assuming that the above steps have been performed first. At the end of the three meditations, the above "Eighteen Path Mandala" ritual is reversed. The eighteen steps are therefore an approach and an exit from the sacred area of mental visualization. In the closing stages of the three tantric rites, the meditator may also insert a reading of the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, the Twelve Nidanas (Twelve Causes of non-enlightenment), and the Heart Sutra, as devotion and time permit.



Section 4. The Goma Fire Meditation

Part One: The Vision of Acala

I. *Entering the Goma Rite.*

Place the palms together before the chest with the single-pronged vajra and the beads between them. Offer a silent prayer according to your own intentions in performing the Goma (for example, the Goma can be used for *Kei-ai*, devotion). Recite three times "Namaku samanda basara nam senda makaroshana sowataya um tarata kam man." (Mantra #I, "In the name of all Vajras, Nam! O Great Fiery Angry One! Destroyer of Evil! Hum! Trah! Tah! Kam! Mam!")

II. *Special Mudra of Acala.*

The mudra used in this step must be transmitted from master to disciple.



III. *Arrange the Goma Altar for the Fire Ritual.*

- A. Remove all *Ju-Hachi Do* articles to the two sides of the altar.
- B. Place the four offerings representing the bad deeds to be burnt away -- red beans, white beans, rice, and oil -- to the right of the fire.
- C. Place the six offerings representing good deeds -- powdered incense, sesame seeds, grain barley, sesame seeds, and poppy seeds -- directly in front of the fire altar, as shown in the diagram. Follow the arrangement shown in the illustration.
- D. To the left of the fire place the *So Ko* water for refreshing the guests. To its left place the *So Ko* ladle. To the left of the *So Ko* ladle place the *Sha Sui* water, for purification. To the left of the *Sha Sui* water place the *Sha Sui* ladle.
- E. Place the bowl of joined leaves and the bowl of separate leaves diagonally to the left of the water. These leaves are used to summon and send away the Buddhas and spirits.
- F. Place the twelve inch pine sticks, representing the Twelve Nidanas and all our desires, on the table to the left of the practitioner.
- G. Place the fan (for fanning the flames), and the small broom (for sweeping the altar) on the table to the right of the practitioner.

IV. *The First Vision. The Agni Fire Altar.*

A. Wrap the beads around the left wrist. Using the left hand, count out fourteen sticks into the right hand. Then place the sticks into the left hand, and purify them with the Vajra mudra and mantra, as follows: with the right hand form the Vajra Mudra: extend the ring, middle, and forefingers outward. Press the tip of the little finger down with the thumb. Move the hand in a circular motion, three times counter-clockwise then three times clockwise, reciting each time "Om kili kili Vajra Hum! Phat!"

B. One by one, dip the top and bottom of each stick into the oil and lay it on the stove of the altar, reciting each time "Om agyana ei sowaka." (Hail Agni! Svaha!) The first three sticks form an equilateral triangle, with the base toward the meditator. Form the left side of the triangle first, then the right, then the base. The next four sticks are placed diagonally and parallel, running southwest to northeast (the altar is considered to be North). The next four sticks are also placed diagonally and parallel, this time running southeast to northwest. The final three sticks form a triangle. Form the base first, then the

left side. Before placing the last stick on the right, after it has been dipped, flip it over so that the tail (marked in black) is pointed away from you. Place it on the triangle in that manner.

C. Light the fire. Take either a stick that has been fire-blackened before the ritual or a knotted stick with pitch and dip it in the oil bowl to the right of the altar. Hold the tip in the candle flame until it lights. Holding it in your left hand, form the Vajra Mudra with the right hand and make a circular motion, three times counter-clockwise and three times clockwise, reciting each time "Om kili kili Vajra Hum! Phat!" Thrust the burning stick into the center of the altar stove in order to light the Goma fire.

D. Purify the fire with Water: pick up the Shasui water ladle which has been placed to the left of the Soko water ladle. Dip the Shasui water ladle into the Shasui water (water for purification). See the characters for *Ram* [𑖦] and *Bam* [𑖧] in the water. Flick a drop of water onto the fire and recite three times "Om amirite Hum! Phat!"

E. Fan the fire: pick up the fan with the right hand and rest the right hand in the palm of the left. Open the fan and fan the flames three times, reciting each time "Om boji bara um." Put the fan down.

F. Offer a sprig of leaves: throw a sprig of leaves into the fire. Visualize a four-petalled lotus opening in the middle of the flames. Recite three times "Om agyana ei geki sowaka." Visualize the Yellow Haired Acala form of Agni to come into an open lotus in the middle of the flames.

G. *Kongo Gassho* (Vajra joined hands): form the *Kongo Gassho* Mudra by placing the palms together with the fingertips slightly intertwined. See in the middle of the flames a great lotus. Above it is the seed word *Ram* [𑖦], which becomes the great fire light worthy, Agni. His body is red and his hair is yellow. He has three eyes and four arms. Fire and light radiate from his body.

H. Invitation. Continuing to perform the *Kongo Gassho* mudra, think to oneself:

Respectfully bowing my head, I here today invite the great, highest, and worthy Ka-Ten (Agni), the great immortal from the central heaven. By this mantra we respectfully beg you alone to come down here and partake of this offering.

I. Summoning Mudra. Place the right hand before the chest palm outward with the thumb folded into the palm. With the left hand grasp the right wrist, while leaving the fingers of the left hand extended. Bend the index finger of the right hand down three times to summon Agni (seen as a form of Vairocana). Recite: "Om Agni! Welcome! Svaha!"

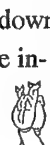
J. Four-Character Binding Mudra. While performing the mudra and mantra, see Agni bound and locked in the flames.

1. With wrists crossed, lock the little fingers together, keeping the backs of the palms toward oneself. Recite "Jya."

2. Keeping the little fingers locked together, bring the backs of the palms together and recite "Um."

3. Maintaining the above hand position, interlock the forefingers and recite "Bam."

4. Maintaining the above hand position bend the ring and middle finger of each hand down over the thumb. Maintaining this position place the hands in front of the chest with the interlocked forefingers aimed at the fire. Recite "Ko." This binds Agni in the fire.



K. A refreshing Drink. Dip the *So Ko* water ladle into the *So Ko* water and flick a drop of water into the fire three times, reciting each time "Om! Desires fulfilled! Vajra! Void!"

L. *Nai Goma*: the Interior Fire Meditation. All the karmic deeds of all sentient beings are to be purified, burned away by this fire. The Interior Goma creates the Bodhi enlightened heart. The external fire is a symbol for burning away all interior thoughts, both good and bad, all troubles and desires, so that nothing, not even ashes, are left in the unconscious mind.

Hold the beads, vajra, and large oil ladle in the left hand. Pick up the small oil ladle in the right hand. Cross the heads of the ladles in front of the forehead, left over right, forming a triangle with the body as the base. Meditate as follows:



When visualizing the Interior Goma, those performing it must realize that all things arise and are born from the effects of karmic i.e., willed deeds, on the mind. To purify the impediments arising from words and deeds, i.e., to attain liberation from them, we must be able to burn away the causes of our deeds by the so-called Bodhi [enlightened] heart-mind. This is the goal of the Interior Goma. If we examine the fire of the visible world, we see that it burns things and turns them into ashes. But this flame [of the Interior Goma] is not the same. It is a violent purging wisdom within the self which burns away all positive as well as negative images. It is a sudden devouring flame which leaves no ashes remaining as residue in the voided heart-mind.

The three places, body, fire, and altar, become one. I.e., the great altar, a sacred area, becomes the Goma fire. The Goma becomes my body; my body becomes Ka-Ten (Agni, Acala); Agni becomes Vairocana. Body, mouth, and mind are fused together in a fiery meditation of interior alchemy. The three, fire, Agni, and I are equal; there is no differentiation. The three bodies, made one, are visualized to expand and fill the entire Dharma (mind) World. They neither arise nor are they annihilated, when separated from words and the images which bear words. The meditator is born in the realm of no birth, where there is nothing which is not diffused by purifying light from Vairocana.

Meditating at the gateway of *Ah* [A], the gateway to outer reality and inner imagination, the Goma fire prevents all the seeds of desires from arising. Entering into the violent cutting wisdom of Vairocana's light, the meditator sees him/herself suddenly becoming a great burning flame, in the center of which is the image of Acala holding a sword and a coiled rope. The swirling flames devour karmic deeds and mental images. The mind, like a wooden vessel laden with avidya, ignorance, never again can return to a state of attachment to words, images, or desires. Nothing remains, no residue is left from these meditative flames.

The meditator next envisions the human heart, purged by the flames of the Bodhi light, washed in a great compassionate water. He/she sees the water of compassion pouring into the body, flowing through it like sweet, white dew. It washes away the evils of the ten directions, cleanses the hearts of all sentient beings, washes away all worries, all troubles. In the meditative vision the waters fall like dew on the petals of a newly budding Bodhi flower. One by one the petals manifest five seed words:

Ah
Bam
Ram
Kam
Ken



The meditator now sees these five seed words become a five-storied stupa. The stupa becomes the body of Vairocana (Dainichi Nyorai, Great Sun Tathagata). The body of Vairocana is the Dharmakaya (The Dharma Body). This is the secretly-transmitted internal Goma, a meditation that can be performed privately as well as publicly during the Goma ritual.

M. Burning the Four Offerings that represent our bad deeds. (Note: Though each item is offered three times, the offering is actually put into the fire only once. Then the offering bowl is hit twice to symbolize the three separate offerings being made.)

1. Take the small ladle in the right hand, the large ladle in your left. Dip the small ladle into the oil and scoop three spoonfuls into the large ladle. Put down the small ladle. Using both hands empty the contents of the large ladle into the fire. Recite "Om Agni! Svaha!" Repeat the procedure three times.
2. Next, holding the small ladle with both hands, pour oil onto the fire three times, reciting each time "Om Agni! Svaha!"
3. Using the seed ladle, throw three spoonfuls of red beans onto the fire, reciting each time "Om Agni! Svaha!"
4. Again using the seed ladle, throw three spoonfuls of white beans onto the fire, reciting each time "Om Agni! Svaha!"
5. Again using the seed ladle, throw three spoonfuls of rice onto the fire, reciting each time "Om Agni! Svaha!"

N. Separate Leaves. Throw three separate leaves over the fire, reciting "Om Agni! Svaha!"

O. Pick up three sticks, dipping each of them, one by one, into the soma (honey and oil mixed), and toss them into the fire. Recite each time "Om Agni! Svaha!"

P. Burn the six sets of offerings in the center of the altar that represent our good deeds. Hold the single-pronged vajra between the thumb, ring, and middle fingers of the right hand. Pinch up the offerings from the small brass bowls while making a resounding sound of the brass vajra against the rim of the bowl.

1. Toss seven pinches of poppy seeds into the fire, reciting each time "Om Agni! Svaha!"
2. Toss seven pinches of barley seeds into the fire, reciting each time "Om Agni! Svaha!"
3. Toss fourteen pinches of sesame seeds (goma) into the fire, reciting each time "Om Agni! Svaha!"
4. Toss three pinches of grain incense into the fire, reciting each time "Om agyana ei sowaka."
5. Toss three pinches of powdered incense into the fire, reciting each time "Om Agni! Svaha!"

6. Take the small ladle in the right hand, the large ladle in the left. Dip the small ladle into the oil and scoop three spoonfuls into the large ladle. Put down the small ladle. Using both hands empty the contents of the large ladle into the fire. Recite "Om Agni! Svaha!" Perform the offering three times.

Q. Prayers of Petition. Meditate silently on the following:

May these offerings of respect to the Agni protect and preserve all the children of the Buddha. May our vows of compassion always be fulfilled.

R. Dip the bamboo stick into the So Ko water and flick a drop of water into the fire three times, reciting each time "Om Desires fulfilled, Vajra! Void!"

S. Leaf-Sprig Offering dispels the vision. Throw a sprig of leaves over the fire, allowing it to land to the left of the stove. Recite "Om Agni! Be gone, be gone! Svaha!"

T. Words of Farewell. With palms pressed together in the gassho mudra, quietly chant: "Our sole wish is that Agni returns to his proper throne."

U. Mudra of farewell. Place the right hand before the chest palm outward, with the thumb folded into the palm. With the left hand grasp the right wrist, with the fingers of the left hand extended. Bend the ring finger of the right hand down three times to send Agni away. Recite: "Om Agni! Begone Begone! Svaha!"



Part Two. *Yo Dan*: The Vision of Buddha Locana.
Burning Away the Fatherly Aspects of the Buddha

The second vision of the goma follows the same format as the rubrics in Part One, except for the following:

- I. Add three sticks of wood to the fire, instead of fourteen.
- II. When throwing the sprig of leaves into the fire, see the image of Buddha Locana sitting in the middle of a lotus in the center of the fire where the leaves landed. Around him see the seven stars of the Big Dipper and the twelve stem-constellations (Precious Vase, Fish, Green Sheep, Cow, Male, Crab, Lion, Lady, Good Fortune, Tree Grub, Bow, Dragon Head).
- III. Recite the mantra "Om! Lord Ram who enlightens nature from within, Svaha!" ("Om gyara kei jibariya hara hatta ji shu chi ramaya ei geki sowaka.") (The sanskrit seed words bears the connotation of welcoming Lord Ram, slayer of Lanka who kidnaped Lady Sita. Ram, or Lord of Light purifies and empties the interior for union in this Bakhti tradition).
- IV. Contemplation of the Buddha Locana vision. Envision in the middle of the fire a lotus throne, on top of which is the seed word *Ken* [𑖅]. The word becomes Buddha Locana (Butsugen Bu Mo), the fatherly aspects of Vairocana Buddha. Around Buddha Locana see the five elements as five planets: Saturn is in the center and represents the earth element. Jupiter is to the East and represents wood. Mars is to the South and represents fire. Venus is to the West and represents metal. Mercury is in the North and represents water. To the East of Jupiter is the Sun, representing yang. To the West of Venus is the Moon, representing yin. Outside the circle of the planets there is a circle comprised of the twelve stem-constellations. In the area between the two circles are the seven stars of the Big Dipper.

The second stage of the Goma rite is performed in exactly the same manner as the first, as listed from paragraphs A. through R. above. The following change is observed in the second stage through the sixth stage, for sending off the vision:

U. Sending-Off Mudra. From the second to the sixth stage of the Goma, the sending off mudra is as follows: cross the wrists right over left. Link the little fingers. Allow the forefinger of each hand to touch the thumb. Flick the index finger off the thumb three times, reciting each time "Om! Lord Ram who enlightens nature from within, begone! Begone! Svaha!"



Part Three. *Shuku Dan*: Star Mandala and Gold Moon Mandala

Part Three of the Goma Fire Rite is performed exactly the same as the first and second stages, except for the following changes:

I. The Third Stage of the meditation envisions the Great Moon Orb One Word Gold Wheel Ushisa Buddha. In the oral tradition, the vision is changed into the thousand armed Kannon (Avalokitesvara) surrounded by the Twenty-Eight Constellations, i.e., the motherly aspects of Buddha Vairocana.

II. When throwing a sprig of leaves into the fire, visualize a great golden wheel where the leaves land. The golden wheel is changed into a great golden moon, in the center of which is a lotus throne surrounded by twenty-eight lotus blossoms, representing the stars of the twenty-eight constellations.

III. Recite the mantra "Om dakisha tara nijiri sodani ei sowaka!" for each of the offerings and invocations. (The mantra has a double meaning: "Om! Constellations that devour evil by thy chant," the textbook meaning, is supplanted by "Om! White-robed Tara whose voice purifies, Svaha!" in the oral Ajari tradition).

IV. The Meditation. See in the center of the fire a great lotus pavilion, in the center of which is the seed word *Borom* [𑖀𑖳]. The word *borom* becomes a great gold moon, in the center of which is a lotus, and Ushisa Gold Moon Buddha (Ichi-Ji Kin Rin Butcho). In the lotus is also the white-robed Tara (Kannon), who is surrounded by the spirits of the twenty-eight constellations.

Offer all of the seeds, grains, oils, wood, and leaves as in the first and second stages, substituting mantra of the Ushisa Buddha and White-robed Tara at each invocation.



Part Four. *Honzon Dan*: Union with Acala and Vairocana

I. Build a Vairocana Altar in the center of the flames. Wrap the beads around the left wrist. Using the left hand, count out fourteen sticks into the right hand, and follow the directions for building the fire to Agni in Part One. The first three sticks, representing the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds, are laid on the fire in the form of a triangle. Next place eight sticks on the fire, which symbolize the entire visible cosmos. Last, lay on three sticks in a triangle pattern, that stand for the head, heart, and belly of man. The fire thus represents the macro and microcosm, filled with the triple mandala.

Follow the order of the first three stages, except for the following changes:

1. Recite the mantra to Acala-Vairocana, as follows: "Namaku samanda basara nam senda makaroshana sowataya um tarata kam man." (In the name of all Vajras, Nam! O Great Fiery-Angry One! Destroyer of Evil! Hum! Trah! Tah! Kam! Mam!). Use this mantra for all of the offerings and invocations.

2. Throw two sprigs of leaves in the fire. Envision a lotus in the center of each sprig. In the center of the first lotus see the seed word *Ah* [𑖀]. The seed word *Ah* becomes Vairocana (Dainichi Nyorai). In the second lotus see the seed word *Kam* [𑖅]. The seed word *Kam* becomes Acala (Fudo Myo-o). Always envision Acala together with Vairocana during the fourth stage of the meditation.

3. Perform the meditation with the two ladles held in a triangle over the head, as in stage one. The words of the meditation are the same as in stage one, except for the following:

Envision the five-wheel seed words:



Ah
Bam
Ram
Kam
Ken



See these five seed words become a five-storied stupa. This stupa becomes the body of Dainichi Nyorai, the Dharma Body. Vairocana's wisdom fire flows from above, from the enlightened land down to the Avici Hell of eternal suffering, the place from which all illusions, karmic deeds, and sorrows arise, into the world of illusions filled with evil and calamities. Throw all of this world of illusion into the raging fires. It will not be reborn. There will be no ashes, no remnants. Relying on the power of this vision, we can leave behind the impediments of this world. Due to the merits of these offerings, peace and stillness will fill us, filled with the desire to fulfill the vow of compassion.

4. When burning the sacrificial items, each of the offerings are doubled, one set each for Acala and Vairocana.

5. When throwing the six offerings of good deeds into the fire, tap the various brass dishes 100 times (or an approximation thereof), while reciting the Acala mantra "Namaku samanda basara nam senda makaroshana sowataya um tarata kam man."

6. Mix the contents of the three bowls -- poppy, barley, and sesame seeds -- together in one of the bowls, and toss it into the fire, reciting the Acala mantra. Then take thirty-six sticks, dip both ends into the oil, and throw them into the fire, reciting the mantra.

7. Purify oneself of all faults by the fiery light of Vairocana. Press the palms together. Fold down the ring fingers. Open out the forefingers. The thumbs are parallel and flush. Recite seven times "Om saruba haba dakana basara ya sowaka." (Om! All faults are burned away by the vajra-wisdom fire. Svaha!). Then envision Vairocana in the fire. See the heart of Vairocana to be like a lotus. The lotus becomes a wheel of light. The wheel of light becomes the entire Dharma World. Think quietly to oneself:

All the Buddhas are nourished by these sacrifices equally.

All barriers are burned away. Endless joy fills my heart.

Send off Acala and Vairocana as in the second stage of the goma, with the linked finger "seeing off" mudra.



Part Five. Burn Away All Worthies of the Three Mandalas,
i.e., the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds

I. Adding Wood. Dip both ends of four sticks into the soma oil in the center of the altar and place them on the fire, parallel, running southwest to northeast. Dip both ends of another four sticks into the oil and place them on the fire, parallel, running southeast to northwest. Dip both ends of one stick of wood into the oil and place it on the center of the fire, running east to west. The first three sticks are accompanied by reciting the mantra "Om! Ah! (Buddha World) Svaha!" See the Buddha world placed directly over the fire. The second three sticks placed on the fire are accompanied by the mantra "Om! Sa! (Lotus World) Svaha." Envision the Lotus World directly over the fire. The third three sticks placed on the fire are empowered by the mantra "Om! Va! Svaha!" Envision the Vajra World directly over the fire.

II. The Fifth Stage of the Goma Fire rite follows the same order as the first four stages, with the following exceptions:

1. When summoning the Three Worlds, throw three single leaves into the fire together, reciting "Om! Ah, Sa, Va, welcome! Svaha!" Envision the three worlds burning in the fire. See all the worthies of the three worlds in the middle of a lotus blossom beneath the three worlds.

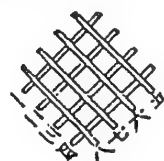
2. During the meditation see in the midst of the flames the three seed words *Ah* [𑖀], *Sa* [𑖡], and *Va* [𑖢]. These three seed words become the three mandala, the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds. Use the mantra "Om! Ah, Sa, Va, Svaha!" for all of the offerings and invocations of the fifth stage.

3. After burning the six items that represent all good deeds, place the hands before oneself, palms up, curving the fingers up slightly to form a single cup. See in one's cupped hands all the merits accrued from doing this Goma. Offer up these blessings so that all sentient beings may be enlightened. Recite "Om! In the name of all Buddhas, may all sentient beings be enlightened, Svaha!" Then say to oneself inwardly:

Now we have passed through the entire Dharma World. All
deeds and impediments have been burnt away; all beings may
pass over to the shore of enlightenment.

Think to oneself that all the remnants of good as well as evil deeds, all visions of Buddha are burnt away in the Goma fires.

4. All of the remaining seeds are now put together in a single bowl. One of the kema leaves are ripped into small pieces, and laid on the top of the bowl. These mixed seeds are used as the food offerings to the spirits envisioned in the sixth, i.e., the last section of the Goma.



Part Six. Burn Away the Spirits of the Entire Cosmos

In the sixth stage of the Goma an imaginary vision of the spirits of the Vedic religion, Chinese and Japanese folk religion, and all other religious traditions are burned away. The reason for burning away all man made notions of the absolute at this point of the Goma is to confirm the fact that in all mystic or kenotic (emptying) religious traditions, "the eye cannot see, the ear cannot hear, nor can the mind conceive" the experience of union with what is transcendent, "on the other shore."

When adding wood to the fire in the sixth stage, throw only three sticks into the fire. Do not dip them in oil. Recite "Om! fiery, brightly burning dark skinned one (Acala)! Svaha!" Use this mantra for all of the offerings and invocations, except as follows:

1. When inviting the vision into the fire, throw a handful of separate leaves into the flames, reciting "Om! fiery, burning Dark One, welcome! Svaha!"
2. Meditation. Form the Vajra Clasp Hands Mudra: Place the palms together with the tips of the fingers intertwined, the thumbs crossed right over left. Envision in the center of the fire the seed word *Kam* [ॐ]. See the seed word *Kam* become the four-armed Acala, surrounded by the twelve spirits of the heavens in all ten directions around Acala. Maintaining the Mudra, recite the following:

I respectfully bow my head and invite the four-armed Acala
Worthy and all the heavenly spirits in the ten directions,
begging them to come down here, to be present and to receive
these Goma offerings.

3. Empowering the Mixed Offerings. Prepare the bowl of mixed offerings by the following mudra and mantra. Touch the middle finger of the right hand to the thumb. Rub the middle finger on the tip of the thumb, then snap three times, reciting "Om! In the name of all Tathagatas, let us contemplate, Om! By these offerings may we attain birth, peace, on the other shore, Svaha!"
4. Turn the right hand so that it is now palm upward. See in the hand the seed word *Vam* [ॐ]. See the seed word *Vam* slip from the hand into the fire and become a huge twelve-petalled lotus. There is one petal for each of the twelve heavenly spirits. Recite "In the name of all Buddhas! Vam!" Then, grasping the seed ladle, offer one scoop of the seeds to each of the worthies, as the mantra is recited:

- a. *Acala*. "In the name of all Vajras, Nam! Trah! Destroyer of evil, Great Angry, Fiery Resplendent One, Hum! Trah! Kam! Mam!" Visualize Acala in the center of the flames.
- b. *Indra*. "Om Indaraya Svaha!" Visualize Indra on the east side of the flames.
- c. *Agni*. "Om Agni! Svaha!" Visualize Agni to the southeast side of the flames.
- d. *Enma* (Yama: King of Hell). "Om Enma! Svaha!" Visualize Enma on the south side of the flames.
- e. *Raksasa*. (Rasetsuten). "Om Raksasa! Svaha!" Visualize Rasetsuten on the southwest side of the flames.
- f. *Varuna* (Suiten: Water Spirit). "Om Barodaya! Svaha!" Visualize Suiten on the west side of the flames.

g. *Vayu* (Futten: Wind Spirit). "Om Bayabei! Svaha!" Visualize FutTen on the northwest side of the fire.

h. *Vaisravana* (Tamonten, Bishamon). "Om Beishira manaya! Svaha!" Visualize Bishamonten on the north side of the fire.

i. *Isvara* (Jizaiten: Spirit Free from Delusion). "Om Ijyanayei! Svaha!" See Jizaiten to the northeast of the fire.

j. *Brahma* (Bonten). "Om Lord Brahma! Svaha." Visualize Bonten directly above the center of the fire.

k. *Prthivi* (Jiten: Earth Goddess) "Om Privithi! Svaha!" Visualize Jiten directly below the center of the flames.

l. *Surya* (Nitten: Spirit of the Sun). "Om Surya! Svaha!" Visualize Nitten to the northwest of the flames.

m. *Chandra Devi* (Gatten: Lady Ruler of the Moon). "Om Chandra! Svaha!" Visualize Gatten to the southwest of the fire.

n. Sources of Light (Sun, Moon, and the Big Dipper, the second stage of the Goma fire rite). "Om! Lord Ram who enlighthens nature from within, Svaha!" Visualize the sources of light directly above the head of Acala (Fudo Myo-o).

o. The Twenty-Eight Constellations. "Om! White Robed Tara! Svaha!" Visualize the twenty-eight constellations surrounding the center of the fire altar.

p. All the Heavens. "Om! Brightly shining, Dark One! Svaha!" Visualize the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds inside the fire.

q. All the Spirits. "Om! Brightly shining, Dark One! Svaha!" See the flames enveloping Acala to leap forth and burn away the entire vision.

5. Put down the seed ladle and pick up the bowl with the seed mixture. Recite "Om! Be purified! Hum! Phat!" Throw the remaining seeds into the fire.

6. Dip both ends of seven sticks in the soma oil. Throw them into the fire, reciting "Om! Brightly shining, Dark One! Svaha!"

7. Pick up the single-pronged vajra with the left hand. Hold the beads between the thumbs and middle fingers of both hands. Pull the beads through your fingers once, representing one hundred times. Recite "Om! Brightly shining Dark One! Svaha!"

8. Using both hands, scoop three spoonfuls of oil into the fire, reciting "Om! Brightly shining Dark One! Svaha!" Stack up the Goma offering bowls and place them, along with the ladles, to the side of the altar.

9. Offering up the Buddha's teachings (Dharma). Form the Kongo Clapsed-Hands Mudra: Place the palms together with the tips of the fingers intertwined, the thumbs crossed right over left. Recall the Four Noble Truths: All of life is conditioned by suffering; suffering is caused by desire; annihilate desires; choose the (eightfold) path of compassion.

Continuing to perform the Kongo Clapsed-Hands Mudra, recall the the Twelve Nidanas, i.e., the obstacles to enlightenment: i. Ignorance (avidya); ii. Actions produced by ignorance (samskara); iii. First consciousness in the womb (vijna); iv. The mental function of naming (nama-rupa); v. Six judgments: five senses plus the mind (sadayatana); vi. Touch (sparsa); vii. Sense Perception (vedana); viii. Desire (trsna); ix. Attachment (upadana); x. Clinging to existence (bhava); xi. Birth (jati); xii. Old Age, Death (jaramaran).

Continuing to hold the Kongo Clasped-Hands Mudra, recall the *Roppara Mitsu* Six Perfections: i. Giving (dana); ii. Precepts (sila); iii. Perseverance (ksanti); iv. Assiduity (vira); v. Zen Meditation (dhyana); vi. Hannya: Wisdom (prajna).

10. The sixth section of the Goma fire rite ends with the monk sending off the visions, sweeping off the front of the altar with a small broom, and replacing the offerings and implements used during the Eighteen Path meditation.



Part 7. Concluding Meditation of Union

The meditator performs the final meditation while assuming the "contemplation" or Zen meditation mudra, right palm placed over the left. Envision a great moon disk filling the microcosm (the meditator's body). In the center of the disk is the seed word *Kam* [𑖅𑖟𑖩], symbol of self united to Vairocana. While contemplating the vision, realize inwardly:

The reason why the Dharma is not understood is because I have never realized that my heart and the Buddha heart are one and the same. My heart and that of all sentient beings are one. The Buddha world, my heart, and all sentient beings are now united as one. We are not different. My body is Vairocana. Vairocana is I. (The oral tradition here says that tears of gratitude pour forth from the heart of the meditator upon realizing this truth).

The other shore of enlightenment, the shore of wisdom (Prajna Paramita, the wisdom parameter) is only reached because the light emanating from Vairocana, symbolized by the fires of the Goma, have burned away all obstacles in me. It is not by my merits, but by the light of Vairocana-Amida-Acala (all three are now seen as one) that enlightenment is attained in the Tendai Tantric tradition.

It is crucial that any merit or good received from the ritual be given away for all sentient beings. The person offering the Goma must give away not only all of the gifts, but any spiritual attainment that might have accrued to him or herself during the meditation. The following prayer is recited:

I now give away all of these gifts, one-by-one, all of the dust and ashes of the real and phenomenal, which comprise the whole ocean of Dharma world; Dharma world is indeed identical with these offerings. I offer all four Dharma bodies, (phenomenal, noumenal, noumenal and phenomenal body as one, noumenal body without hindrance). The three worlds (past, present, future) are always nourished by these gifts...

The Goma Fire Rite ends by reversing the order of the Juhachi-do meditation, as seen in the first part of the meditation, i.e., before the fire was lit. The officiant once again offers of the five visible items (on the left side of the altar), and the six symbolic mudra, as before. He/she sends back the visions by the chariot mudra, rings the bell, and performs the *Goshimbo* five purificatory mudra, to end the rite. As the meditator bows deeply to Acala and leaves the sacred area, the closing words of the Goma, Lotus, and Vajra meditations warn that the ritual was in vain if henceforth the life of the meditator is not filled with compassion and helping love towards others.



II. THE LOTUS WOMB MEDITATION

Introduction

The Lotus Mandala meditation uses Tantric prayer, i.e., mind, mouth, and body, (mandala patterned visualization, mantric chant, and mudra hand dance) for the purpose of achieving Buddhist awakening. The goal of the meditation is to "put on" or assume by total body prayer the aspects of a Buddha or enlightened person. Since there is nothing that I can do as a person limited in space and time to merit this awakening by my own deeds or power (jiriki), it is necessary to achieve the "crossing over" or attainment of the absolute with the help of one who has already crossed over to the other shore, that is, by the power of another (tarikiki). This "other" is seen to be the central figure of the Lotus Mandala, Vairocana, the Buddha of infinite light and compassion.

Vairocana, the Buddha of Infinite Light and Compassion, (pronounced Vairochana in sanskrit, *Dai-nichi Nyorai* in Japanese) is assisted in this task of awakening the meditator by the Great Light King Acala, (Achala, *Fudo Myo-o*). During the course of the mandala liturgy, the meditator is made to see a series of startlingly realistic visualizations (called "eidetic" or moving visions) identifying with Buddha as in a mirror. In a manner analogous to the powerful Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola, or the words of Paul calling the early christians to "put on Christ," the Buddhist monks and nuns who perform these liturgies put on the body, heart, and mind of Vairocana-Acala.

It is important to repeat, in the Tendai version of this rite, that the "putting on" of the aspects of Vairocana, who is the equivalent of Acala, Amida, and any other aspect of a Tathagata or enlightened being, (we must not be attached to the name or the vision) is not done through any merit or power of my own. The light and saving grace of the absolute non-conditioned state is always shining on me, like the sun in the heavens. I am told to simply open my mind, heart, and body to the vision, like a lotus opening to the light of the sun. The seed of enlightenment, envisioned as the sanskrit seed-word *Ah* is already planted there, waiting to be watered and awakened. In this sense, the Greek letters Alpha-Omega and the sanskrit *Ah* and *Om* are similar, i.e. symbols of the infinite origin and infinite return to origin. The Lotus meditation is an opening, a watering and flowering of the seed word *Ah*, waiting in my heart to blossom and bear fruit, the result of awakening to union.

The Lotus World meditation, as in the case of the Goma and the Vajra rites, is structured by the Eighteen Path Mandala, which acts as an introduction and an exit from the sacred area in which the meditation takes place. The following structure guides the meditator through a clockwise process into the center of the Lotus World, where union is achieved with a vision of Vairocana meditating in the Zen-lotus position.

I. Purification. (As in the Eighteen Path Mandala).

1. Entrance rite.
2. Summoning and petitions.
3. The first offerings.
4. Chant of the Lotus mandala.
5. The Nine Songs of praise.

6. Vows of the Bodhisattva.

7. *Goshimbo*, a series of six mudra-mantra to purify the meditator.

II. Building the Lotus Altar.

1. Awaken and summon the spirits of the Lotus Mandala.

2. First eidetic vision: generate the Lotus Stupa.

3. Putting on the 32 aspects of the Tathagata's body.

III. Contemplate the Lotus mandala.

1. The great ocean meditation.

2. Lotus flower and vajra hand meditations.

3. Lotus King and Lotus Center meditation.

4. Self, Tathagata, and Dharma are one.

5. Give away merit to all sentient beings.

6. The mandala wheel and its colors.

7. Contemplate each Buddha of the Mandala.

IV. Invite the Buddhas inside the Mandala.

1. Point to the Mandala entrance.

2. The meditator becomes Acala.

3. Don the armor, clasp the sword of Acala.

4. Ring the bell, invite the Buddhas to enter.

5. With binding mudra, bolt the gates, purify with sword.

6. Welcome the Buddhas with water and flowers.

7. Offer prayers and vows to the Buddhas.

V. Put on the body and merits of Vairocana.

1. Protect the body with vajra armor.

2. Cast out all evil thoughts and spirits.

3. Purify the four directions and three worlds.

4. Again lock and guard the four gates of the Mandala.

VI. The six offerings.

1. Offer the six gifts (water, incense, flowers, burning incense, rice, and light), the concrete aspects of reality.

2. Offer the six gifts as symbols, i.e., the phenomenal aspects of reality.

VII. The Samadhi Meditation.

1. Envision the Lotus Mandala, as AH seed word generated.

2. Mudra and mantra of Vairocana.

3. Enter Samadhi meditation (vipassana).

4. Chant with beads and mudra.

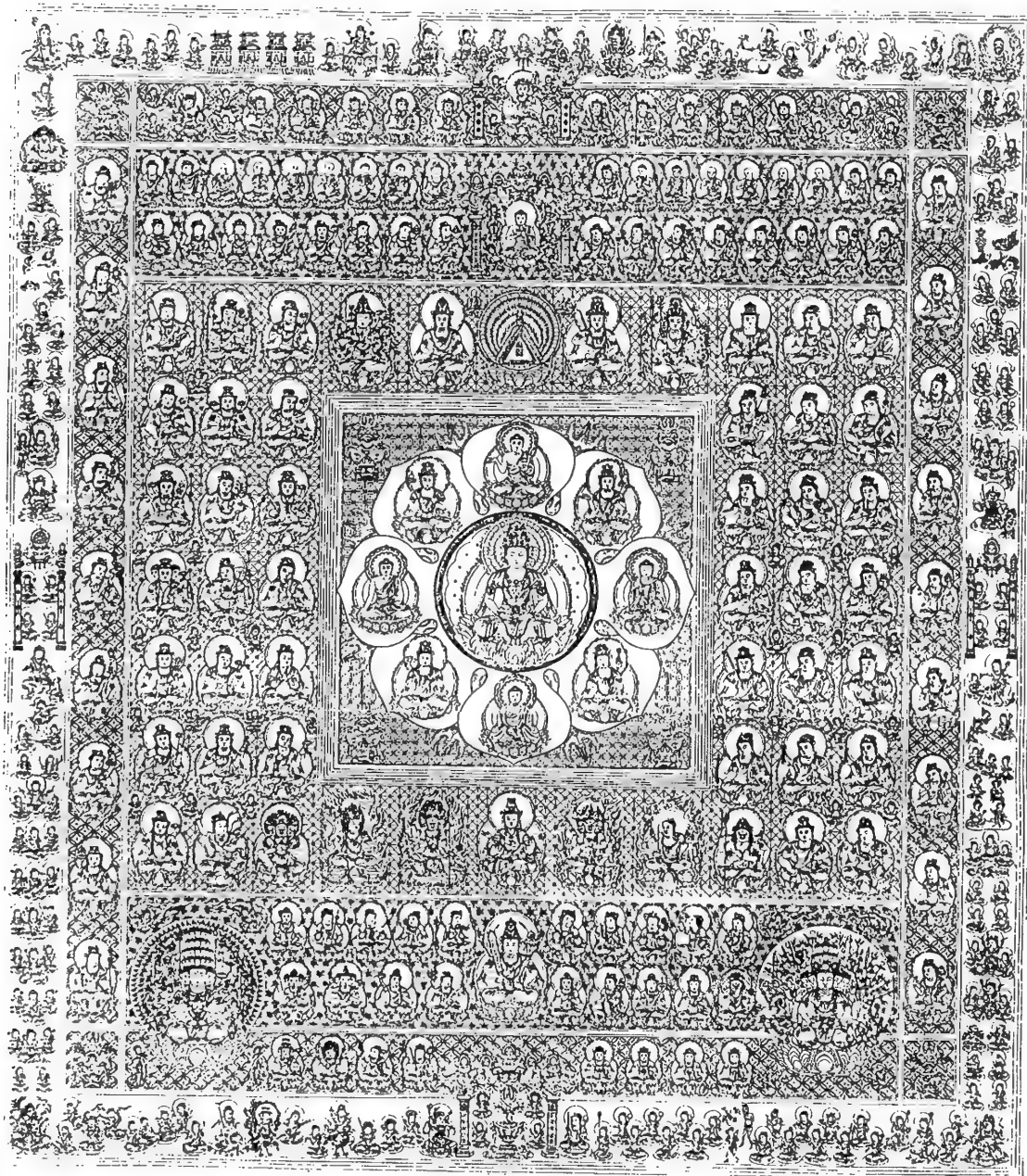
5. Envision self as Buddha Locana.

VIII. Offerings of Thanks, exit through Eighteen Path mandala.

(Reverse the process of stage one, above).

The goal of the Lotus Mandala Meditation is union with Vairocana in the center of the microcosm, signified by identification with the various images of the Lotus World. The goal of the Vajra Mandala meditation, which immediately follows the Lotus ritual, is

to give away all of the benefits of the Lotus and Vajra worlds, in a true emptying or kenosis experience of the meditator's mind and heart. The images of both mandala are but *upaya*, convenient skillful means for achieving the third of the four noble truths, the annihilation of desires, and the thoughts that lead to them. In the philosophy of emptiness that Tendai Buddhism, and the world's great mystic traditions follow, emptiness (kenosis, the dark night of intellect and senses) is the basic condition for "achieving the other shore." The meditations of Tantric Buddhism are therefore a method for kenotic union.



The Lotus-womb Mandala

Part 1. Purification

The first stage of the Lotus meditation is the same as the Eighteen Path mandala rite found in Part One, section two, above. The following changes are observed:

A. The chant in honor of the Lotus World sings the praises and envisions the center of the mandala as follows:

1. Vairocana, in the center, the Dharma Body manifestation.
2. Ratnadhvaja, *Tohobodofu* in the east, or top of center.
3. Samkusumita, *Kakaihufu* in the south, left of center.
4. Amitabha Buddha, *Buryoshufu* in the west, below center.
5. Divyadundubhi, *Hotsuho Tenko Rai-infu*, north, right of center.
6. Samantabhadra Boddhisattva, southeast of center.
7. Manjusri Boddhisattva, southwest of center.
8. Avalokitesvara Boddhisattva, northwest of center.
9. Maitreya, *Miroku* Boddhisattva, northeast of center.



Below the center of the Lotus World mandala envision the Five Light Kings, as seen in the illustration, from right to left:

10. Acalanatha, (Fudo Myo-o).
11. Trailokyavijaya, (Gozanze).
12. Kundalin (Gundari), or Vajra Kundalin.
13. Enma, King of Hell (Enma).
14. Vajra Yaksho (Yakisha).



B. Visualize the *Ah* seed word. A special mantra is added at this point in the the Lotus World, while the monk or nun forms the clasped hands mudra with empty center:

In the name of all Buddhas

Ah ~~is~~ is one with me

The Three (Dharma, Lotus, Vajra) one with me,

One thou art with me, Svaha! So be it!



The mantra is repeated five times, and the mudra is pressed to the five places, (belly, heart, shoulders, throat, and dissolved over the head). Body, mouth, and mind (*shin-ku-i*) are called "samaya," i.e., same or one with the Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds. The oral teaching here intervenes to show the following correspondences in the greater cosmic order:

Head	yi	(mind)	Buddha	Dharma	body	mandala
Mouth	ku	(heart)	Lotus	Reward	body	mantra
Body	shin	(belly)	Vajra	Response	body	mudra

In a more profound sense, as learned in the Eighteen Path meditation, my heart, the tathagata, and all sentient beings must be seen as united (samaya) or symbolically one. Samaya has a four fold sense here, that is, equally possessing the Buddha nature (the ability to be enlightened), I share in the original vow of Amida to save all sentient beings, prevent all obstacles from arising, and bring about complete and sudden enlightenment in self and others. The identity of self with the compassionate vow of the Tathagata (Amida, Vairocana, or any image of Buddha) is but an *upaya* a convenient and skillful means to

awaken one's mind, heart, and body from the sleep of ignorance. From this awakening it becomes possible to dwell in a state of deep meditation, realizing that life and death are equal, beginning and end are a single process, a single *Ah* seed word buried deep in my heart, the center of the Lotus.

The *Ah* seed word is therefore the basis for the Lotus world meditation, the first letter of the Siddham (Tantric) alphabet. The disciple is told by the Ajari master to throw him or herself into the womb of the *Ah* lotus world, at this point, and realize for the first time that enlightenment takes place within my own heart. The bodhi-awakened heart mind is born from the *Ah* seed in the depths of the Lotus world. The *Ah* seed word is the basis for all subsequent awakening, realized for the first time in the recitation of the above "entering Buddha samaya" mantra. The ten fingers of the empty center mudra, held straight up, symbolize the oneness of Buddha (right hand) and I (left). The middle fingers are now slightly opened, symbolizing that the *Ah* seed word within me has now been awakened, opened to a light that does not lead to the arising of wordly thoughts, a light not gained by merit, that permeates the entire cosmos.

C. The second mudra of the Lotus World meditation is symbolic of the reward body, born from the *Ah* seed word. The *Ah* seed word turns the Dharma body into the compassionate Lotus-reward body, in the meditator's heart. The mudra is formed by touching the extended index fingers together, with third, fourth, and fifth fingers pressed down over the thumbs. The mantra invokes the seed word *Kam* to effect the transformation.



Hail, All Buddhas!

Dharma world

Self-risen (innate disposition)

Within me! Kam!



See a fire springing from the fingertips, that fills and purifies the entire world, burning away all mental images, all worries and all impediments arising from my deeds (N.b. karma means deeds, not destiny or fate). The fire is a bright red in color. From the midst of the flames arises a black Acala whose sword and flames cut away all impediments. A wind then arises which fans the flames, turning them into a Lotus, symbol of the Buddha's "Reward" body being born. The meditator is now told to see that his or her body is one with the very fibre, the warp and woof of the cosmos. "My body is the dharma world, and from it is born the Lotus, symbol of love and compassion."

D. Third, the meditator performs the "Revolving the Dharma wheel" mudra and mantra meditation. The fingers are interlaced, left palm facing outward and right palm inward, with thumbs bent back and touching (see the illustration). The eight fingers inter-twined represent the eight aspects of the Buddha's life, (descent from the Tusita heavens, conceived, born, renounce the world, defeat temptations, enlightenment, revolve the dharma wheel by teaching, and entry to nirvana). The mudra and mantra meditation "Revolve the Dharma Wheel," by forming the mudra and revolving it three times to the right, then touching the five places, the belly, heart, throat, shoulders, and forehead. By so doing the Response body of Vairocana, with folded palms in the "middle way" meditation of Samatha concentration, is made one with my body, symbolized by the two thumbs touching.

Hail all ye Vajra-Buddhas!

Vajra and my body one, Kam!

The eight fingers are also interpreted to mean the eight fold path of enlightenment, now realized in the putting on of the Vajra or Response-body. The Lotus wheel thus gives birth to the Vajra world, making the Eighteen Path Mandala (Dharma body), the Lotus Mandala, and the Vajra world meditation a single process. The visualizations of the Vajra World are found in Part Three of the study, below, brought to fullest realization in the central Vajra Assembly hall meditation. The Buddha's *eightfold path*, or the eight aspects of the enlightened Buddha are interpreted to be (1) the recognition of causal dependence, (2-6) hear, see, smell, taste, speak, and think no evil, (7) Samatha (Zen) concentration and (8) Vipasyana centering and emptying meditation, respectively. My body is now one with the Three Bodies of Buddha, and the Lotus Meditation may now begin.

E. Part One of the Lotus Meditation ends with three mudra and mantra meditations, which provide a transition from the Eighteen Path mandala into the powerful visions of the Womb world. These consist in 1) Donning the armor of Vajra compassion, 2) Using the seed word *Ram* to purify and enlighten the mandala, 3) Purifying and invoking the earth spirits to protect the altar area, making it into a pure land for performing the meditations.

1. The first mudra-mantra meditation is called "Donning the Vajra Armor." The empty hand Lotus mudra is first formed, (clasped hands, empty center), and the index fingers are drawn down so that they touch the first joint of the third "fire" finger. The mantra is then recited, and the mudra is touched to the five places (belly, heart, throat, shoulders, head):

In the name of all Vajras,

Om! Vajra Armor, Hum!



Next, the vajra-thunder mudra is formed, by pressing the four fingers down over the thumbs. The index fingers are now extended, and the meditator sees the seed words *Om* and *Don* at the tip of each finger. A dark blue thread of light issues from each finger, and vajra armor is tied onto the twelve places of the body in eidetic vision by repeating the words *Om-Don* and touching the finger tips, as if tying cords and armor around the body. The twelve places are: the waist, (back to front), the left knee and right knee, belly, hips, breastplate, left and right shoulders, throat, left and right head, and helmet. The manner of tying the cords, order of tying, and pronunciation of the seed words differs for each of the three sects, and each Ajari master. The meditator sees him or herself become Vajrasattva, a dark bodied armored figure holding a five pronged vajra and a bell. The external visage of Vajrasattva is angry, but his heart is filled with compassion.

2. The second transition mudra is called "Contemplation of the seed word RAM." The seed word *Ram* is symbol of Buddha Locana, a Buddhist adaptation of Lord Ram and the spirit of Bakhti devotion in the newly popular Hindu religion of India, out of which Tantric Buddhism developed in the Fifth and Sixth century, before its coming to T'ang dynasty China. (See the Buddha Locana meditation on pg. 23, the second Fire meditation). The seed word *Ram* is located in the center of the forehead of the meditator, and corresponds to the fire triangle directly above the center of the Lotus World, as well as the central ornament in the crown of Vairocana and Buddha Locana (see illustration, pg. 34).

The Oral hermeneutic tells the meditator to see the center of his or her forehead filled with a bright white light, as if a shining pearl were inserted there. The pearl turns into the seed word *Ram*, and the light emanating from its center purifies my body and the entire Dharma world. The fire mudra is formed, by pressing the fingers over the thumbs, then extending the index fingers and touching them at the tips, while reciting the mantra:

In the name of all Buddhas, Ram!

The pearl in the center of the forehead now becomes bright as the morning sun. From the bright white center red flames emanate, surrounding the triangle above the center of the Lotus Mandala, and filling the altar and sacred area in front of the meditator. The seed word RAM generates the fire triangle of the lotus and vajra stupa, and the fires of love or *bakhti* that fill the meditator's heart.

The last mudra and mantra of Part One of the Lotus meditation invoke all the Tathagatas, by their power and merit alone, to protect and purify the meditator as he or she enters the Womb World. The clasped hands with hollow center mudra, basic sign of the Lotus meditation is formed, and then the fourth or "water" fingers are opened slightly. As the mantra is recited, the mudra is moved in a circle three times to the left, and three to the right, and then pointed upward to heaven, and downward to the earth. Finally, the mudra touches the five places and is dissolved over the head.

In the name of all thou Tathagata
All terror and fear be gone!
All of these gateways let us enter,
By thy help, Kham! Ken!
Protect us with thy great strength,
By all thy Tathagata merit,
Hum! Hum! Trat! Trat!
Oh Thou incomparable ones Svaha!



Part 2. Become Tathagata Buddha

The second stage of the Lotus meditation has three parts, I) purification, II) interiorizing the Lotus stupa, and III) by the power of Vairocana (tariki) the putting on of the thirty-two aspects of a Tathagata. As part two of the dramatic rite begins, the meditator calls on the primordial spirits of mother earth for protection from the evil temptress Mara, as the Buddha did under the Bo tree long ago. Just as Buddha called on the earth to witness his purity of intention, by pressing his hand to the ground, so too the meditating monk or nun here places the right hand on the ground while reciting the mantra.

I. Purification

A. Purification of earth. The *kesa* saffron colored robe, draped over the left shoulder of the monk or nun, (leaving the right shoulder bare, as in Indian sadhu-monastic custom), is used to cover a portion of the ground in front of the right knee of the meditator. Taking the five pronged vajra in the left hand and pressing it against the heart, the right hand is placed on top of the robe spread out in front of the right knee. The right hand is touched to the earth with the fingers stretching toward the left knee. The earth is pressed eight times, one for each line of the mantra.

Oh Thou lady Devi, come here before me,
Tell all the Buddhas, to help me cross over,
And practice wisdom's superior ways,
Thus able to pass to the other shore.
May Mara's legions be destroyed and broken,
And I saved by Shakyamuni's merits;
Evil's victory thus fully suppressed,
By drawing this sacred Mandala, Kham!



The right hand pressed to the ground eight times represents the wisdom of the five Buddhas of the Lotus center, and the three bodies (dharma, reward, and response body) of the Buddha. Just as Buddha called on the earth to witness his own resolute rejection of the temptress Mara's vision, so too the meditator is warned to cast aside all selfishness, impurity, and anger in order to continue on in the meditation.

B. Build a protective wall. Grasping the five pronged vajra between the two hands, with the fingers folded down over the knuckles, the meditator now sees the earth to be a firm and strong ally. Strengthened by the thunderbolt held in the clenched hands, the three seed words *Om! Bu! and Ken!* are recited, creating a triple wall of earth's friendly spirits to surround the outermost edges of the mandala, and keep out all impurities.

C. Purification with water. The meditator now picks up the *sanjo* bamboo ladle, dips it in the *shasui* pure water (as in the Juhachi-do recitation) and purifies the Lotus altar. The altar is sprinkled three times, to purify the Dharma, Lotus, and Vajra worlds, then the eight directions, beginning with the northeast "Gate of Demon," while the mantra of purification is recited:

In the name of all Buddhas
One with the absolute
One with the void



Everywhere penetrating
Original nature purified
Dharma world washed clean. Svaha!

D. Purification with Incense. Now taking the hand held incense burner in both hands, the meditator recites the following verse:

Oh all ye Buddhas, take pity on us sentient beings
We only beg that you keep in mind our needs,
Here and now I address each strong and holy one,
Firmly bring Privithi (Mother Earth) too under your care.
May all Tathagatas, and children of the Buddha,
Never forget their vows of compassion, be by our side!
I invoke the siddhi-strength of mother earth here,
to confirm in us thy protecting power.



E. Invitation of the spirits to enter. The incense burner is laid down on the altar, and the two hands are formed in the shape of an open bowl, as in the illustration. The invitation of Privithi is now chanted:

Hail Privithi, Come! Svaha!

The meditator sees Mother Earth Privithi enter the sacred area, and be purified by the flames and sword of Acala. All of the Tathagatas then affirm their vows to protect earth and all sentient beings. The mudra of firm earth is formed while reciting the mantra:

In the name of all Buddhas,
May all Tathagata blessings dwell in us.
May stainless spotless Acala
Purify our original nature, Svaha!



Visualize that the fire seed words *Ram* and *Ah*, from which the Lotus world and the state of compassionate enlightenment spring, are implanted in the womb of mother earth, visualized as the altar in front of the meditator. The seed word *Ram* is seen as a flame that burns away the seed word *Ah*, all Siddhi powers, and all visions of the Buddha until a state of kenotic emptiness remains. Thus the ultimate goal of the Lotus and Vajra meditations, in the Tendai tradition, is a state of emptiness (sunya, k'ung 空 or hsu 虛) realized by compassion and love in everyday living.

II. Interiorize the Lotus Stupa.

In step two, the meditator "puts on" or interiorizes the Lotus Mandala. The monk or nun envisions a square earth cakra, base of the five layered stupa, as generated by the seed word *Ah*, springing from an open lotus. The seed word *Ram* is directly above the *Ah* character, burning it away, and with it all worries, pride, desires, and reason, source of intellect and thought. All logic, philosophy, and spiritual attainment must be given away, in a true "dark night" of the spirit and senses. The entire Lotus world, envisioned in the next stage of the meditation, is also meant to be burned away. I.e., earth, water, fire, wind, and space are seen as a process of meditatively emptying the Dharma world. The ashes left from *Ram* fire are washed away by water, dissipated by wind, and finally left void and empty, so that nothing is left. Only when empty can true awakening *hongaku* 本覺 be realized, and this only by the power of Acala-Vairocana.

A. In the first step of the vision process, the meditator's body becomes the Lotus stupa. I.e., earth is below belly, water above navel, fire in heart, wind in throat, space in the head of the meditator. The seed word *Ah* is envisioned to be in the heart, and the seed word *Ram* is directly above the crown of the head. The flames emanating from the seed word *Ram* are seen to descend and burn completely my mind, emptying all worries and thoughts therefrom. The flames descend and burn the heart and entire body, so that only the seed word *AH* remains, from which no thoughts and no images arise. The seed word is then brought down and placed at the base of the spine, below the belly. The flames now produce the image of *Vairocana* deep inside, which arises and fills my entire body.

The Lotus world arises from the body purified by the *Ram* and *Ah* meditation above. The flames produce five seed words, *Ah Vi Ram Hum Ken*, the basic dharani or mantra of the Lotus world, (*Abira-um-ken*), then change into five *Ah* syllables (*A, Aa, Am, Ah, Ak*), and finally into the five cakra syllables of the Vajra, *Ah, Hrih, Trah, Hum, Vam*, as follows:

i. The five seed words of the Lotus and Vajra worlds:

A	Bi	Ra	Um	Ken	(lotus)
Ah	Hrih	Trah	Hum	Vam	(vajra)

ii. The elements and their symbols:

earth	water	fire	wind	space	(element)
square	circle	triangle	moon	peak	(stupa)

iii. The colors or aura envisioned in the symbols:

yellow	white	red	black	rainbow	(lotus)
green	yellow	red	white	rainbow	(vajra)

iv. The corresponding place in the meditator's body:

below	above	heart	mouth-	crown	(body)
navel	navel		nostrils		

v. The corresponding mudra or hand symbol:

fifth	fourth	third	index	thumb	(mudra)
-------	--------	-------	-------	-------	---------



B. The meditator is now ready to become the body of *Vairocana* by putting on or imagining the above symbols to be a part of his or her own body. The mudra and mantra for becoming the five wheel cakra are as follows:

1. Form the fire mudra, and see the seed word *Ah* to be in the heart, and the seed word *Ram* to be above the crown of the head. Touch the mudra to the head three times, and see red flames burst forth from the *Ram* character, and burn away all images from my mind, and empty my body. Then press the mudra to the belly, and see the *Ah* seed word descend and rest below the navel. Recite the mantra three times:

In the name of all Buddhas, *Ram*!



2. Form the five pronged vajra mudra, and press it to the belly, seeing the seed word *Ah* dwelling there. It is a bright gold in color, and changes into a square, the cakra or symbol of earth within me, the color yellow.

In the name of all Buddhas, *Ah! nata buddhanam Ah!*



3. Form the eight petal Lotus Blossom mudra, and hold it above the navel, seeing there the seed word *Vam*. Its color is white. It changes into a circular cakra, symbol of the element water, and it emits a bright white light.

In the name of all Buddhas, Vam!



4. Form the fire mudra (as in No. 1 above) and hold it above the heart, seeing there the seed word *Ram*. Its color is a fiery red, and it changes into a triangle, symbol of the element fire within me. It emanates a bright red light.

In the name of all Buddhas, Ram!



5. Form the wind mudra, and hold it in front of the face. See the seed word *Kam* between nose and mouth, a dark blue-black in color. It changes and becomes a quarter moon, symbol of the element wind inside me. Its color is an effulgent blue-black.

In the name of all Buddhas, Kam!



6. Form the space mudra, and hold it above the crown of the head. Envision there the seed word *Ken*, color of the rainbow, which changes into the space cakra, the shape of the leaf of a Bo tree. The color of space includes all colors.

In the name of all Buddhas, Ken!



The stupa formed inside my body now changes into the shape of Vajrasattva, seated with a bell in the left hand and a five pronged vajra in the right, pressed against the heart. The meditator now sees the Lotus mandala produce first a blossoming flower with eight petals, surrounding Vairocana in the center. The Lotus is the blossom out of which springs the fruit or harvest of the Vajra World mandala. Thus all of the images of the Lotus and Vajra world are contained in the *Ah* seed word that springs from the earth of the Womb matrix mandala.

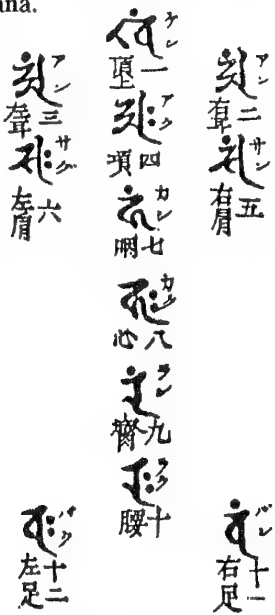
C. The meditator next sees the dharma waters of the second circle sprinkling on the lowest square earth cakra, causing the lotus to blossom, and the vajra world to spring forth as fruit from the lotus' center. The vision is interpreted to mean that the Lotus Mandala gestates the Vajra mandala. The triangle above the Lotus mandala center is symbol of this relationship, in that it represents burning away the three impediments (desires, worries, sorrow) and gives birth to the three bodies (dharma, reward, response) of the Buddha, and the four *paramitas* or "crossings" symbolized by the four Bodhisattva that occupy the four interstices of the Lotus center. The four Bodhisattva stand in the following relationship to Vairocana:

Ah	Vam	Ram	Kam	Ken
Vairocana	Fugen	Manjusri	Kannon	Maitreya
Awaken	practice	awaken	awaken	upaya skill
heart	yoga	mind	intuition	for others
Earth	Water	Fire	Wind	Space

D. The meditator now must contemplate the entire Lotus world, and relate each segment of the mandala to his or her own body. Just as the center of the lotus turns into a stupa that fills my interior, so, too the entire Lotus word must be imprinted on my exterior body. To do this, it is necessary to pause and look at the Lotus mandala for a moment, and then relate the twelve major figures pictured there to twelve places in my own body.

1. By looking at the Lotus Mandala, the meditator can easily distinguish the central figures of the twelve halls that surround the center. Directly beneath the eight petaled Lotus Center are the five great light kings, with the figures of Fudo Myoo (Acala), Gozanze (Trailokyavijaya), Gundari, Enma, and Vajrayaksa. Directly beneath these terrifying visions are the prominent figures of the thousand armed Kannon (Avalokitesvara) and the 108 armed Vajra King, to the left (north) and right (south) of the base. Kannon represents the entire left side of the lotus world, while Vajra King rules the entire right side, i.e., the Vajra world. Directly above the Lotus center is the three sided Wisdom symbol (a blazing triangle), the figure of the historical Buddha, and Manjusri, in ascending order. To the left and right of Manjusri are Maitreya and Buddha Locana.

Manjusri
 Buddha
 Buddha Locana Maitreya
 Triangle
 All of the Lotus World
 All of the Lotus World
 The Five Light Kings
 1000 arm Kannon
 108 Arm Kongo Zo-o
 Sunyata-Space
 Susiddhi-devotion
Twelve halls of the Lotus Mandala



2. The twelve halls in the Lotus world mandala are points of focus for the above meditation. These twelve images are now to be imprinted on the body of the meditating monk or nun, with a seed word in place of each figure, thus "empowering" or imparting to the devotee the devotional aspects of the image. The order of imprinting is as follows:

Place	seed word	Image
1. left ear	Am	Maitreya (Miroku Bosatsu)
2. right ear	Ahm	Buddha Locana (Butsugen Bomu)
3. crown	Ken	Buddha (Vairocana)
4. forehead	Ahk	Triangle, P'ien-chih Yin
5. rt. shld	Tsan	The Lotus World
6. lt. shld	Su	The Vajra World
7. throat	Kam	Lotus center, nine worthies
8. heart	Kah	Paramita Boddhisattva
9. over navel	Ram	Trailokyavijaya (Gozanze)
10. bl. navel	Rah	Acala (Fudo Myoo)
11. rt. leg	Vam	1000 armed Avalokitesvara
12. lt. leg	Vah	108 armed Kongo Zo-o



The meditation is performed while holding the Karma mudra, as in the illustration, (clasped hands, thumbs and little fingers raised and touching, third "fire" fingers pressed inwards and down), and pressing it to each of the twelve places in turn. Recite the mantric seed word proper to each place, and visualize the respective seed word to be imprinted there on one's body. The seed word then changes and becomes the image of the Buddha or Bodhisattva, so that the Lotus Mandala is imprinted on the body of the meditator.

3. The twelve visions represent the twelve causes of rebirth, i.e., the twelve nidanas washed pure by the light of the Lotus and turned into twelve causes of enlightenment. (Refer to pages 29-30 for the twelve causes). The number twelve also symbolizes the twelve earthly stems, signs of cycling change in nature. Thus the twelve months of the Chinese lunar year, and the twelve times five or sixty year cycle, are transformed from symbols of change to causes of enlightenment in the Tantric meditative system. This is accomplished by making each of the twelve symbols of change into a seed word of enlightenment, in the Lotus mandala meditation.

4. In a manner analogous to the Kepher symbol of the Kabbalah system, the meditator now ascends one step higher to the crown over the head, and envisions the "King of a Hundred Lights" i.e., the image of Vairocana in the seed word *Am* to fill the entire Dharma world with a bright white light. The hands are formed in the intertwined vajra mudra (see illustration) and held over the head as if wearing a crown. The seed word *Am* is envisioned over the head, a bright red in color, emanating a piercing white light with hundreds of rays that fill the entire cosmos. The mudra is moved back and forth three times while reciting the mantra, then dissolved over the head as if undoing the top knot of hair over Vairocana's head.



In the name of all Buddhas Ah!

The *Ken* seed word at the crown of the head in the above twelve seed word meditation and the *Am* character of Maitreya and Buddha Locana are seen to emanate from one higher source, i.e., Vairocana, the Buddha of light emanating from within the body of the meditator. The *Kah* character above the heart, the *Ram* character above the belly, and the AH character that generates the lotus from the earth below are in fact a part of a single process of purification and refinement. This process continues in the following mudra and mantra meditations, and culminates in the final internalization of the *Trikaya* Three Bodies of the Buddha below. The *Am* character of the crown cakra represents the Dharma body, the *Kam* character of the heart is the Reward body, and the *Ram* above the belly is the Response body of Vairocana. The meditator forms the "Non-arising heart-mind" mudra and presses it to the heart while reciting:

Hail all Buddhas, Ah!



He or she then forms the fire mudra for burning away all impurities at the belly and recites the mantra:

Hail all Buddhas, Ram!



next, using the same fire mudra, he or she presses the index fingers to each eye and recites the mudra, while seeing the eyes purified by a bright red light:

Hail, all Buddhas, Ram!

E. The white and red flames that swirl through the body of the meditator now burn away all vestiges of reason, so that knowledge based on sense or intellect does not arise. Bodhi enlightenment follows from the state of non-arising thought, that is, the light of *Ah* and *Ram*, surging from the two index fingers, create a wisdom light in the heart which gives birth to a Lotus, the source of *śūnya* (k'ung 空) void non-arising wisdom. The wisdom light has now purified the entire body, head, heart, belly, and eyes, (*Am, Ah, Ram, Rahm*). The fifth and last phase of this stage of the meditation follows, in which the five Buddhas of the central Lotus flower are interiorized as seed words.

The five mantra of completion are chanted, while the basic vajra mudra is re-formed. For the first time the meditator sees the images of the five Buddhas as five wheels, inserted inside his or her own body. The *kuden* oral teachings of an Ajari master are required here to complete the meditation. The seed words are repeated three times, once for each of the triple bodies of the Buddha:

Dharma body:	Ah	Vam	Ram	Kam	Ken
Reward body:	Ah	Vi	Ra	Um	Ken
Response body:	Ah	Ra	Ha	Sya	Na

F. The above process of tantric meditation had two goals, as follows: 1) purification and 2) eidetic visualization of the Lotus world imprinted inside the meditator's body. Before going to the last goal 3) of the second meditation, i.e., the putting on of the thirty-two aspects of a Tathagata, the meditator pauses to "give away" or externalize the five cakras of the Lotus world, so that they fill and enlighten the entire cosmos. The rite is called "Contemplation for externalizing the five cakras wheels," and begins with a vision of the seed word *RamM*, the bright red flames from which purify the external world from all impediments to enlightenment. The ordinary things of the world now become adamantine instruments of the Vajra World. The Lotus cakras are envisioned in reverse order, beginning with the crown and ending with the square earth *Ah* cakras at the base.

In the name of all Buddhas, Ram! (World is a vajra tool).

In the name of all Buddhas, Kem! (Basic nature is pure).

In the name of all Buddhas, Kam! (Blue wind fills world).

In the name of all Buddhas, Ram! (Red fire purifies all).

In the name of all Buddhas, Vam! (White water cleanses).

In the name of all Buddhas, Ah! (Yellow earth gestates).



III. Put on the Thirty-two Aspects of Tathagata Buddha.

The third goal of the second part of the Lotus meditation is to "put on" of the thirty-two aspects of a Tathagata Buddha. The Tathagata of the Lotus World meditation is here interpreted to be Vairocana, but the meditator is told not to be attached to any form of the Buddha. The thirty-two aspects include the vision of all four Buddhas and the four Bodhisattvas of the center, as well as the other major figures of the mandala. Tathagata is therefore a generic term for the potency within the self for enlightenment. Buddhist images and statues are not idols for worship, but symbols of what the meditator should be, if truly enlightened.

The first three aspects of a tathagata are the *Trikaya*, the three Dharma, Reward, and Response bodies of the preceding meditations. The fourth through the twenty-eighth meditations put on the dress, body, and thoughts of all Buddhas. The the twenty- ninth through thirty-second meditations assume the identity of the four great Bodhisattva, Fugen, Kannon, Manjusri, and Miroku, (Samantabhadra, Avalokitesvara, Manjusri, Maitreya). Part Two of the Lotus World meditation ends with two highly esoteric visions of the female aspects of enlightenment. The process of interiorizing the Tathagata is as follows:

1. The Dharma Body. Form the Lotus Bud mudra. There is no distinction between self and Buddha. The Three (Dharma, Lotus, Vajra) are made one, equal in origin, Svaha!

2. The Reward Body. The fire mudra is formed, and the "Dharma world gives birth" mantra recited, uniting self to Lotus:

Hail all Buddhas, The Dharma World gives birth,
Self-arising, one with my nature, Ham!



3. The Response Body. The mudra for revolving the Dharma wheel is formed, and the mantra recited, uniting self with the Vajra:

Hail all Vajras, Vajra and my body united, Kam!



4. The Sword of Wisdom cuts away knowledge. The wisdom sword mudra is formed, and the mantra recited:

Hail all Buddhas, Oh great sword of pure spotless Dharma,
All things self-arising from Dharma nature are revealed by
cutting self from knowing. The act of total faith in
Tathagata, frees from passion, Hum!



5. The Dharma Conch. By blowing the Dharma conch, the Tathagata awakens all sentient beings to the realization of nirvana. The Dharma conch mudra is formed (thumbs tucked under index fingers, wind, water, and earth fingers extended), and the mantra sung:

Hail all Buddhas, Ahm!



6. The Bodhisattva Vows to bless all beings. The hands are formed in the eight petaled open lotus mudra; the AH mantra for bringing the blessing of the Reward body to all creatures sung:

Hail all Buddhas, Ah!



7. The Great Wisdom of the Vajra. The blessing of Vajra wisdom is invoked for self and all creatures. The five pronged vajra mudra is formed, and the mantra sung:

Hail all Vajras, Om!



8. The Tathagata Crown. The Usnisa crown of Amida, seen as a trousseau of hair rising above the head, is symbolized by mudra and mantra:

Hail all Buddhas, Hum! Hum!



9. The Tathagata Forehead. The vajra fist, thumbs tucked under the four fingers, folded down over the palms, is formed with both hands. The left hand is pressed to the waist, and the right knuckles are placed against the forehead.

Hail all Buddhas!



In void, vast endless space,

Pure, spotless Dharma manifest, Svaha!

10. Tathagata Brow. Using the same mudra, the knuckles are pressed against the brow. The meditator sees that the mind of non arising purifies the causes of arising in others.

Hail all Buddhas,
Ah! Ham! Jah!



11. The Buddha's Begging Bowl. The meditator takes the two ends of the kesa robe and holds them between the left and right palms, folded in the Zen samadhi mudra. The robe represents the armor of the monk, who has chosen the holy path of Buddhist perfection. The hands represent the bowl with which the monk or nun begs for food, a sign of separation from the "Three possessions," i.e., death, birth, and attachments. Abstinence from dead things, celibacy (abstinence from birth and arising thoughts) and giving away all possessions, real and spiritual, are symbolized by the Buddha bowl mudra. As the mantra is recited, all gifts and offerings are seen as vehicles of enlightenment, when given away.

Hail all Buddhas, Vah!



12. Freedom from Fear. The left hand now holds both ends of the monk's kesa shoulder robe and the right hand is held up, palm outward, symbolizing the freeing of all sentient beings from fear and anxiety.

Hail all Buddhas!
Always, everywhere victory, victory,
Fear overcome, Svaha!



13. Fulfillment of the Buddha's Vow to make self and vajra one. The left hand continues to hold the kesa, and the right hand now is lowered and points outward, in the gesture of Amida giving saving enlightenment to all sentient beings. The light issuing from the Vajra world floods over the meditator, who recites:

Hail all Buddhas, Vows fulfilled,
Vajra and I made one, Svaha!



14. The Compassionate Eyes of Buddha. The fire and water fingers of the right hand are extended, and the thumb holds down the bent wind and space fingers (see illustration). The left hand, forming the vajra mudra, is pressed to the left waist. The mudra is touched to the left and right eyes, so that the fire (third) finger touches the right eye, and the water (fourth) finger touches the left eye. The mantra is recited twice:

Hail all Buddhas, for thy
Great, pure, most auspicious endowment,
The compassion filled Tathagata eyes, Svaha!



The meditator pauses here to meditate, as follows: "By purifying these eyes of flesh, may I put on the eyes of the Buddha, to see the deepest mysteries of the Tathagata world. The fleshly eyes see all the allurements of the world. But the the dharma realized eye (right-lotus) sees the hearts of all sentient beings, and the wisdom eye (left-vajra) sees the roots, the origin of non-arising. By both eyes we can see the difference in the real 實 and the 假法 phenomenal.

15. The Tathagata Cord. The hands are formed in the Amida mudra, while the meditator considers: "Those who do bad things bring evil on themselves, while those who do good bless all those around them." While reciting the mantra, the cord of the Buddha, gold in

color, is seen to stretch out and rescue all those caught in emotional attachments and the sickness born from them. The touch of the cord brings about a total act of faith and trust in Tathagata Buddha (Amida).

In the name of all Buddhas,
Hey, hey, great cord, long, boldly
Heal all illness in the sentient world,
Manifesting total trust in Tathagata, Svaha!



16. The Buddha's Heart. From a folded fist, fingers and thumbs tucked in, extend the fire fingers to touch straight up. Realize that wisdom's sign is a compassionate heart, filled with a great and overwhelming awakening to do good and help others. Recite the mantra while pressing the mudra to the heart:

Hail all Buddhas,
Born of Wisdom, compassion's fragrance, Svaha!



17. Buddha's Belly. With the same folded fist as above, extend the fourth or water fingers, and press the mudra to the belly, while recalling that wisdom and immortality *amrte* are born from the water (belly) cakra. The sweet dew of the Lotus world's VAM water extinguishes the fires of the burning intellect, and brings life to Lotus and Vajra.

Hail all Buddhas,
Give birth to immortality (*amrte*) Svaha!



18. Buddha's Waist. Extend the water finger of the right hand only, and see one's body put on Tathagata's wisdom body, and the golden color of a Buddha.

Hail all Buddhas,
Tathagata's body be born, Svaha!



19. The Buddha Storehouse (Belly). Extend the fire and earth fingers, with thumbs pressed against the folded index fingers and press the mudra to the belly. See the body enveloped in the purifying rays of the sun, emanating from the mudra at the belly. Light fills the entire body, washing away all defilements and memories of past grudges or worries. A bright mani pearl is seen to be contained within the storehouse cakra of the lower abdomen, filled with compassionate wisdom. The pearl now turns into a light wheel radiating outward, filling the entire cosmos.

Hail all Buddhas!
The Tathagata body is born! Svaha!



20. Universal Light, Buddha's Halo. Fire fingers rounded and touching, index (wind) fingers opened and extended, the thumbs are bent inward so that the image of a light held in the hands is created. The mudra is circled to the right three times, and the meditator envisions light to diffuse everywhere in the cosmos:

Hail all Buddhas,
Light blazing round thy head,
Tathagata halo, arc arising, Svaha!



When the body is pure, an aura of light surrounds it, emanating from a mani pearl in the earth cakra below the belly. The light ascends and turns into the halo or arc of wisdom that is around the head of Buddha. This subtle light of wisdom touches the spiritual as well as

the physical order. The thumbs pressed inwards hide the Dharma body, the pearl-like source of *sunya* emptying that arises from the seed word *Ah* and fills the Lotus world with awakening wisdom.

21. The Tathagata Armor. Form the armor of fire mudra, and touch it to the five places, while visualizing the self putting on the bright Vajra armor. The armor gives the power to suppress evil and carry out the work of a Buddha.

Hail all Buddhas!

Oh light of the Vajra,

Shine brightly, Hum!



22. Tathagata's Tongue. Form the upright clasped hands mudra, and tuck the thumbs inward, while visualizing one's tongue to become the tongue of Buddha. The mantra empowers the meditator to teach as a Buddha and preach the Vajra Dharma.

Hail all Buddhas!

Oh tongue of the Buddha,

Source of true Dharma, Svaha!



23. Buddha's Speech. Thumbs extended, index and water fingers folded, fire and earth extended, touch the lips with the mudra, and see the eight superior qualities of the Buddha's voice instilled in my own speech. The eight virtues are: 1) pleasant, 2) easy to understand, 3) harmonious, 4) soft spoken, 5) no error, 6) no lies, 7) dignified, 8) deep and far reaching in wisdom.

Hail all Buddhas, Tathagata's words,

Filled with all wisdom, and beauty, Svaha!



24. Buddha's Teeth. Index fingers pressed down over the thumbs, fire, wind, and earth fingers touching, press the mudra to the teeth and see one's mouth and sense of taste to be Buddha's. Now we can taste the best of all tastes, and in moving be the source of Dharma teaching.

Hail all Buddhas!

With Tathagata's teeth, best of all tastes,

Attain birth in the Tathagata's world, Svaha!



25. Buddha's Discourse. Spread the index fingers outwards, touch the mouth with the mudra, and see how the fears of all creatures are dispelled by the Buddha's harmonious discourse. By preaching the correct Dharma, no obstacles from within, or incorrect interpretations from outside, can harm the self or others.

Hail all Buddhas!

Thy inconceivably wonderful words,

Whose effect is felt everywhere, Purifying sounds, Svaha!



26. Buddha's Ten Powers. Thumbs and space (little) fingers tucked inward, wind, fire, and water extended, hold the mudra in front of the chest and pray for the ten powers, as follows: 1) know right and wrong, 2) know past, present, and future, 3) know all worlds and levels of existence, 4) know what others think and desire, 5) know our basic capacities,

6) know the results of all kinds of practice, 7) know all forms of meditation, 8) know the changes of all sentient beings, 9) know birth and death, and 10) know how to destroy all evil passions. Recite the mantra, and at the recitation of the three seed words *Hum, Sam, Jam*, see that the ten powers are realized in the real, phenomenal, and void realms:

Hail all Buddhas!

The ten powers, May I have each one!

Hum! Sam! Jam! Svaha!



27. The Buddha's Thoughts. With fire, water, and earth fingers upright and touching, bring index (wind) fingers straight down over the thumbs, and press the mudra to the forehead. Meditate on how all sentient beings are meant to attain the benefits of rebirth into the empty dharma world, a void absolute free from all limitations. Recite the mantra, as follows:

Hail all Buddhas!

From Tathagata's thoughts,

All benefits arise.

By oneness with the void absolute,

Identity of opposites, we are not two, Svaha!



28. Awaken to the Equality of all things with Dharma. Form the mudra by folding thumbs and water fingers down, with the remaining fingers upright. See my nature, all things, and the Dharma as equal by nature. Recite the mantra, as follows:

Hail all Buddhas!

All Dharmas everywhere realized,

Tathagata attained, Svaha!



29-31, Put on the Three Signs of a Bodhisattva. The wisdom of the Bodhisattva Fugen, compassion of Kannon, and care for all sentient beings of Manjusri are assumed by repeating the mudra and mantra three times. Hold the fire, water, and earth fingers upright, and bring the index (wind) fingers down to touch the first joint of the middle finger. Hold the mudra in front of the chest, and recite the mantra three times:

Hail all Buddhas!

Dharma everywhere present,

Frees from passion.

Everywhere manifest,

Great thou art, wonderful, Svaha!



32. The Bodhisattva of Mercy, Maitreya. Using the same mudra as above, the meditator now puts on the last aspect of a Tathagata, the merciful compassion of Maitreya. Ponder how all Tathagata, the Dharma and Lotus worlds arise from the seed word AH of the mandala. The fruit of the seed word is a great, universal compassion. The compassion of the Tathagata is like a rain falling from heaven that purifies and brings life to all beings.

Hail all Buddhas!

Invincible Victor,

The hearts of all sentient beings

Do thou touch and fill, Svaha!



Part Two of the Lotus meditation now ends with two special invocations to the female aspects of the great light kings of the Lotus world, the *Vidyarajni*. These lady Buddhas are seen to dwell in a state of samadhi meditation, nourished by a sweet dew that is offered to all sentient beings, good and bad alike, for salvation. The Lady Light Queens are eight in number: 1) Tara, 2) Svetiyarka, 3) Pandaravasini, 4) Vilokani, 5) Ekajata, 6) Gauri, 7) Yasamati, and 8) Bhirkuti. The index fingers are pressed against the first joint of the fire fingers and the mantra sung to invoke these eight figures of the Lotus world to dissolve all obstacles to the enlightenment of sentient beings of the three worlds, past, present, and future.

Hear us as follows, may all those who are
 One with the void, and not one with the void,
 All equally everywhere accept the Tathagata vows
 And be one with thee, best, auspicious void, Svaha!

Lastly the Eight Lady Light spirits are invoked to keep all sentient beings from harm. The right palm is laid over the left, and the mudra is circled right and then left three times. The thirty-two aspects of the tathagata are placed inside the palms, and given away by the meditator to all sentient beings. The marks of the Tathagata bless the whole world, alleviate suffering mankind, heal illness, and lead all sentient beings to the other shore. In giving away all benefits of the meditation, the monk and nun are reminded that the only benefit to self is attained by benefitting others.

Hail all Tathagatas And all Tathagata paths. That the mind be always void,
 Be aware only of the unmoveable absolute, Svaha!



Part 3. Meditate on the Lotus Mandala

The third stage of the Lotus ritual consists in a lengthy contemplation of the Lotus World Mandala. After envisioning the twelve hallways of the mandala, the meditator sees him/herself bathed in the saving and illuminating light of Vairocana. The series of eidetic visualizations contain some of the most powerful imagery in the Tantric meditative tradition. The meditation is divided into ten steps. The details of the ritual are kept to a minimum, and the visible artistic effects emphasized.

I. *The Great Ocean.*

Envision in front of the self the seed word *Viṭ*, on top of the earth cakra. It now changes into a great ocean. It is filled with the waters of the Eight Virtues (pure, cool, good-tasting, soft, moistening, comforting, thirst-quenching, and nourishing). It rests on the earth cakra, and is contained within a five-pronged jewel vajra, as its shores.

II. *The Lotus Flower.*

See a lotus flower to be planted in the center of the great ocean. The stem of the lotus is a vajra, and the eight petals of the lotus are seen to open amid the five prongs of the vajra. The vajra and lotus planted in my belly.

III. *The Flower Pavilion.*

Envision a ten spoked karma wheel beneath the lotus blossom, between the vajra and the lotus. The ten spoked wheel, plus vajra and lotus, represent the twelve seed words of the Lotus mandala, imprinted in my body in Part Two of the Lotus Meditation. These twelve seed words are now related to the five cakra within the body, as follows:

Hail all Buddhas

Eternally gone beyond

The incomplete Dharma world,

Am, Ken, Am, Ah, (Space cakra, Vairocana)

Sam, Sah, (Earth cakra, Maitreya and Amida)

Ham, Hah, (Wind cakra, Tengu, Divyadundubhi)

Ram, Rah, (Fire cakra, Hofu, Samkusumita Raja)

Vam, Vah, (Water cakra, Kaiho, Ratnadhvaja)

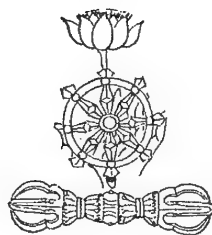
Svaha! So be it!

Ram, Rah, (Body, mudra, Dharma body)

Hra, Hah, (Mouth, mantra, Reward body)

Ram, Rah, (Mind, mandala, Response body)

Svaha! So be it!

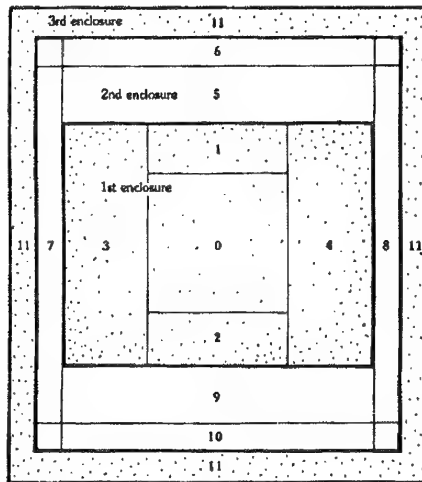


Now see a five pronged vajra, representing the five central buddhas of the stupa, and a three pronged vajra, for the Three Tantric sources of prayer, i.e., mind, mouth, and body, atop the lotus.

IV. *The Vairocana is King of the Marvelous Lotus Throne.*

Envision in front of the meditator an eight petaled white lotus, in the center of which is the seed word *Ah*. The Lotus is austere and perfect in its beauty, containing within itself all precious things, the storehouse of the self-arising lotus world. The *Ah* character now turns into the figure of Vairocana, King of the Lotus World. See that if one goes "down" or out-

ward from the *Ah* character, all sentient beings evolve. Going "up" or inwards, Bodddhi awakening is realized. But enlightenment is not something attained, like a jewel or accomplishment for the self. Only by Vairocana's aid is this awakening to be attained, and only by giving away through acts of compassion and "emptying" all virtues and accomplishments can Vairocana be seen.



- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 0. The Lotus-Womb Mandala Center | 1. Hall of Wisdom-fire |
| 2. Hall of the Light Kings | 3. Hall of Compassion (Avalokitesvara) |
| 4. Hall of Vajra-Lightning | 5. Hall of Sakyamuni Buddha |
| 6. Hall of Manjusri Bodhisattva | 7. Hall of Earth Storehouse (Ksittigarbha) |
| 8. Hall of Samantabhadra | 9. Hall of Kenosis-emptying |
| 10. Hall of Susiddhi devotion | 11. Outer Hall, Guardians and Folk Spirits |

V. Contemplate the Mandala.

The above four steps are now summarized in the Mandala or Tao-ch'ang contemplation. The meditator assumes the Samadhi mudra by holding the right hand over the left in the lap, thumbs touching. There are forty-one lines to the meditation, summarized as follows:

1. See on top of the earth cakra the ocean of water perfumed by the eight virtues. From the middle of the ocean arises a five pronged vajra, stem of the marvelous white eight petaled lotus. Between vajra and lotus is a ten spoked karma wheel, platform of the Lotus. See the lotus fully open, revealing the golden pestil center, which contains the seeds of the Flower Storehouse world. In the center of the golden pestil is the seed word AH.

2. Light issues from the *Ah* seed word and spreads out in the four directions, filling the entire Dharma world.

3. There are four gates leading outward from center, that is, one gate in each direction, leading to east, south, north, and west (the gates at the outer rim of the Lotus Mandala, see illustration). These four gates are symbols of the fourfold path of the Madhyamika school of emptiness, i.e., the four tetralema that lead to the "middle way" of no judgment: i) the gate of affirming judgment; ii) the gate of empty or non-affirming; iii) the path of neither affirming or denying; and iv) the path of simultaneous holding and emptying. The four paths now multiply into four-times-four, or sixteen external lotus petals, seen as pathways or connectors to the other shore of transcendent experience. Eight petals are for popular Buddhist chant, and eight petals are for tantric Buddhist meditation, the vajra-lotus path.

4. Recollect that the eight petals of the lotus in fact generate the three and five pronged vajra world, as effect or fruit of meditation. The oral tradition here interposes a lengthy explanation of the three-plus-five interrelated stages of the Tendai tantric process as follows:

a. The three pronged vajra is a samaya-symbol of consecrating or "crowning" the meditator in the triple path of tantric meditation. I.e., the mind is purified by the emptying fires of meditation, a white pathway of light issuing from the first prong of the vajra. The heart is filled with red fires of bakhti devotion, seen as a bright red fiery path issuing from the second prong of the vajra. The whole body is filled with a bright golden-yellow light, seen as a path combining the rules of a monk and the samatha-vipasyana wisdom meditation of the belly, issuing from the third prong of the vajra:

i) Dharma-mind, emptying purification, white light.

ii) Lotus-heart, compassion, devotion, red light.

iii) Vajra-belly, wisdom, bodily intuition, gold light.

b. The five pronged vajra is a symbol (samaya) of the colors and iconography of the central figures of the Vajra world mandala i.e., the five Dharma-bodies to be "put on" by the meditator in the last stage of the tantric meditation process. The Lotus and Vajra meditations must therefore be seen as part of a single meditative process, from Lotus to Vajra to absolute emptiness.

i) Vairocana: Dharma world & original self are one, center, sun.

ii) Aksobhya: Wisdom to see things as they are, east, mirror.

iii) Ratnasambhava: Wisdom to see all things equal, south, fire.

iv) Amida: Wisdom to see all things with compassion, west, lotus.

v) Amoghasiddhi: Wisdom to help others cross over, north, Buddha.

5. Envision a half-open lotus directly above the ten pronged karma wheel, underneath the open lotus. This vision represents compassion manifest in concrete, physical giving. Thus, the offering of water, powder incense, flowers, burning incense, rice, and light are symbols the six paramitas (crossings) from the shore of suffering to the shore of union with the absolute, by acts of compassionate giving.

6. Now envision the open lotus, atop the half open lotus of giving. Contemplate the eight petals of the lotus in the center of the mandala. Each petal has an image of the Buddha or Bodhisattva imprinted on it, as in the illustration. Realize that the Lotus blossom was able to open and manifest itself because of the concrete practices taught in the third,

fourth, and fifth stages above. The practices are conditions, not causes of awakening, i.e., the light of Vairocana issuing from the Lotus center, not my deeds, is the cause of the Lotus flowering. Giving compassion empties and purifies the selfish desires that are obstacles to realizing presence of the Lotus within.

7. See how Vairocana is seated on the golden pestil throne in the center of the Lotus mandala. The light flowing from the lotus fills me with Vairocana's wisdom.

8. Envision the eight petals around the center of the Lotus. The images of the four Buddhas and four Bodhisattvas are symbols of Vairocana's vow to enlighten and save all sentient beings. The effervescent light that constantly flows from the center of the lotus is mediated by the eight figures, each of which manifests the Buddha nature in a different way. The Lotus world in fact manifests the Buddha nature that must be found within me. I.e., the four Buddhas and four Bodhisattvas of the Lotus represent the ways that I must manifest the Buddha nature.

9. The Lotus Flower with Vairocana in the center is therefore the cause of enlightenment, and the seeds of the lotus, numerous as the sands of the sea, are the effect of Vairocana's power to enlighten, planted in my body to grow and blossom.

10-12. The seeds that blossom bear fruit within me, symbolized by the mudra, mantra, and eidetic vision of the nine central figures of the mandala. Thus, I must first see the eight petals surrounding the central circle of the Lotus. At first, the circles are empty, but are seen to glow with a bright light. Next the meditator sees the seed words glowing in each petal. Lastly, the seed words turn into the living vision of the nine Buddhas. The true vision of the Buddha nature is the empty circle, as cause, while the fruit or effect of the meditation is the image of the Buddha printed on my heart.

13-15. From the center of the Lotus issues twelve rays of light, that spread and fill the entire lotus mandala, and are imprinted on my body as twelve seed words (see above, #3, flower pavilion). Four of the rays of light issue directly from Vairocana in the center. Two rays issue from each of the four surrounding Buddhas, i.e., the seed words *Sam* and *Sa* issue from Amida in the west, and are imprinted on my two shoulders. The seed words *Ham* and *Hah* issue from Amoghasiddhi in the north, and are printed on my heart. *RAM* and *Rah* issue from Ratnaketsu in the east, and are printed above the belly. *Vam* and *Vah* issue from Samkusa in the south, and are printed on my knees. Thus the images in the Lotus world that correspond to these twelve positions (see Part Two, above, the meditation on the twelve branches), are fruits of the compassion of the five central Buddhas. Note also that the number twelve symbolizes the twelve nidhanas, now changed from causes of recycling to gateways or paths to enlightenment. The light issuing from the Lotus center is therefore cause, and enlightenment the fruit or effect of tantric meditation.

16-18. Now see the entire Womb world-lotus mandala to be filled with a myriad lotus blossoms, each connected to the center by a ray of light emanating from the center. The meditator is free at this point to envision the mandala as he or she wills. The eidetic or moving aspects of the vision are important, and the Ajari now instructs the novice to contemplate the central figure of the Lotus throne, i.e., Vairocana, and see how all fears and

obstacles are overcome by this awakening vision. The rays of light emanating from Vairocana fill the entire void space of the world and bring enlightenment to all sentient beings.

19-22. The palace around the central figure of Vairocana is now analyzed by the meditator. The walls are covered with pearls, symbols of the teachings and vows of Buddha fulfilled. Row upon row of pillars fill the central palace, connecting it to the outer halls of the mandala. The petals of the lotus are giant pillars moving outward to fill infinite space. The ceiling and draperies keep out all worldly thoughts and desires, and protect all sentient beings who seek enlightenment.

23-28. The body of Vairocana is adorned with jewels, and the crown has six ornaments, representing the six paramitas marks of wisdom: 1) charity, 2) precepts, 3) perseverance, 4) strength, 5) Zen meditation, 6) prajna wisdom. The flowing robes represent leaving the world of desire. The clouds of incense and flowers that fill the air around the Buddha represent the spirit of giving, kind words, kind conduct, and working together. The flowers and petals pour from the sky like rain, adorning the earth with compassion and blessing.

29-30. The sounds of beautiful chant and music fill the Lotus world so that all who hear it are filled with loving compassion. Those who hear the music of the Lotus spontaneously break out in song themselves, that purifies the sense of hearing and fills the boundless void with joy.

31-34. The meditator is now filled with a wondrous peace, which like the pure Aka water in the ritual vases, washes away worries and fills the mind and judgment with wisdom. Just as the flowers of the Lotus world open in timely sequence, morning to night, opening and bearing fruit, so by the light of the Lotus center all sentient beings are illuminated everywhere and at all times, by the merit and grace of Vairocana.

35-38. All of the earth is now seen to be wrapped in Samadhi meditation. Just as Lady Wisdom (Lotus or Womb world is here seen to be a lady) chooses concentration (Zen) as the interior goal of meditation, so the goal of the male Vajra world is outgoing Vipasyana intuition. The process of crossing to the other shore is seen to have two stages, i.e., interior enlightenment of the Lotus World, and external awakening to the need of all sentient beings through the Vajra meditations.

39-41. The Lotus world is now called an *upaya* skillful means to help all sentient beings attain interior enlightenment. By chanting, singing, and dancing the wonders of the Dharma-womb world, all one's own visions of the Lotus, the saving light of Vairocana and the worthies are given away for the sake of all other sentient beings. The Lotus world therefore is meant to be a popular aesthetic-art experience for universal enlightenment, as well as a vehicle of tantric meditation.

VI. *The Three Signs of Strength.*

The Text of the Lotus meditation now turns to the Eighteen Path Mandala (Page 30, above) for a simple poetic offering of my self, joined to the strength of the Tathagata Vairocana and the entire Dharma world, as a universal puja for all sentient beings (vajra palms mudra):

I hereby give all my strength
Through the power of the Tathagata,
And the merits of the entire Dharma world,
To be a universal *puja* offering.

VII. *The vision of Universal Nourishing.*

The mudra of the offering for Universal Nourishing is formed (see illustration), and while reciting the mantra, the monk or nun sees self become Akasagharba (Kokuzobosatsu):

Om! Born in the Void Space Vajra, Koh!

The meditator is now told to give away the vision of the Great Ocean and the Lotus World, the Dharma world, and merit gained from Vairocana, as an offering for all sentient beings. Now he or she has indeed become a "Void storehouse," ready to perform the Samadhi meditation of concentration on emptiness. The symbols of the three powers given away are interpreted to be the incense, flowers, sacred music and dance, (mantra and mudra) which now fill the entire world with their awakening fragrance. See that all the joys, glory, and adornments of the world pass away and turn to ashes, while only the experience of the void remains.

VIII. *The Great Cakra Altar.*

The meditator now forms the vajra binding mudra, and sees the entire Lotus mandala to be brought into the self as if by drinking from a cup. The mudra is pointed inwards to the altar, outward to the Buddha, upward to the sky, and downward to the heart. Finally, it is touched to the crown, forehead, and lips, as if printed on the cosmos, and then sipped into the body. The mandala is bound to the self while reciting the mantra:

Om! Vajra cakra, Hum!

IX. *The Paths to the Center.*

The meditator sees that there are three paths to the empty center of the mandala, represented by the five, three, and single pronged vajra. The five pronged vajra represents the five cakra of the Lotus center. The three pronged vajra represents the three paths of tantric Buddhism, mudra, mantra, and mandala. The single point vajra represents the mind empty of all thoughts, ready for samadhi meditation and union.

A. *The Five Central Cakra.* The meditation on the five central cakras is called "The path to the multicolored world." The five pronged vajra mudra is formed, and the meditator envisions the five central cakra, as follows:

1. The mudra is pressed to the heart, and the seed word *Ra* is seen to be planted there, emanating a white color, for Vairocana. The mantra is recited three times, and the mudra is revolved in a circle three times to the right, starting from the northeast.

Hail all Buddhas, Ra!

The recitation opens a white pathway to the mandala's center.

2. Again pressing the mudra to the heart, the seed word *Ram* is envisioned, emitting a bright red light. The *Ram* seed word and the red light stand for the Buddha of the Eastern quarter, Ratnaketsu. The mantra is recited, and the mudra revolved three times, opening a red pathway to the east of center.

3. The yellow road to the south is opened by envisioning the seed word *Kyah*, and the Buddha Samkusumitara, while revolving the mudra and reciting the mantra.

4. The blue road to the west is opened by envisioning the seed word *Ma*, and the Buddha of Immeasurable Life (Amida). The mantra is recited and the mudra revolved three times.

5. The black road to the north of center is opened by envisioning the seed word *Ka* and the Buddha of the northern sector Dundhubi (Tengu Raion). The mantra is recited and the mudra revolved three times.

i) The meditator sees that all five paths, each with its own color, leads to the center of the mandala, where the meditation of union with Vairocana takes place. The meditation is repeated, using the same seed words:

In the name of all Buddhas, Ra, Ram, Kyah, Ma, Ka!

ii) A second set of five paths is then constructed mentally that lead to the five external halls surrounding the center, i.e., 1) the hall of wisdom above the lotus flower; 2) the hall of the light kings below center; 3) The halls of Kannon-Ksittigarba to the left; 4) the halls of Vajra-purification to the right; and 5) the hall of the Void Storehouse Boddhisattva below the Hall of the Light Kings, where the figures of the 1,000 armed Kannon and the 108 armed Vajrasattva are so prominent.

B. *The Three Intermediate Paths to the Center.* Next the three pronged vajra is invoked, and three pathways, red, yellow, and white in color, are constructed to the three sections that stand between the outer walls and center. The same mudra is used, and the mantra recited:

In the name of all Buddhas, Ra, Ram, Kyah

A red pathway is constructed to the Hall of Buddha, a Yellow path to the Hall of Manjusri, and a white path to the Susiddhi hall of wondrous self-emptying compassion.

C. *The Outer Wall, a Third Path to Center.* The seed word *Ra* is envisioned, emitting a bright white light that fills the outermost hall of the Lotus Mandala. The mudra is formed and mantra recited three times:

In the name of all Buddhas, Ra!

The meditator sees that in fact there is only one path to the center, a single bright white light that burns away all visions, and completes the kenotic process in the fires of the internal Goma, that leave no ashes. (See the Goma Fire Rite, Page 26).

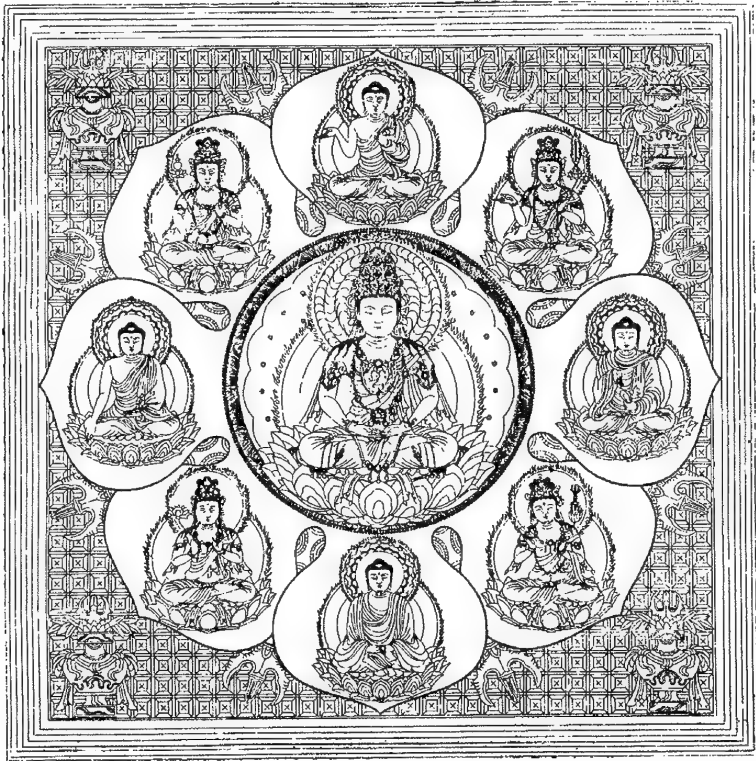
X. *Contemplation of the Lotus Mandala.*

The meditator now forms the Samatha-Zen mudra, right palm over left in the lap, thumbs touching. In front of him/her is seen the image of Vairocana on his throne, superimposed on a full white moon, and a lotus blossom. Each worthy of the mandala is seen to be seated on a similar throne, inside a great round moon. The meditator recites the mantra "In the name of all Buddhas, *Ah*!" The mantra generates the image of the seed word *Ah*, emitting a bright gold color. The *Ah* seed word is placed in the middle of an open lotus flower, within the bright moon orb. From this point, the *Ah* character is seen to change into the lotus stupa, a square, circle, triangle, half moon, and crown, as in the illustration:

Ken
Kam
Ram
Vam
Ah



The stupa changes into the figure of Vairocana, sitting in the Zen samadhi posture of meditation. A gold light emanates from Vairocana's body, and illumines each figure of the Lotus mandala. The manifestation is called the "Transcendent, form purifying Dharma body" of Vairocana, which now emanates a crackling and sparkling light that fills the entire cosmos, past, present and future. The meditation ends with the realization of Vairocana's (i.e., Amida's) vow to save all sentient beings, and how this vow is represented by the light that penetrates to my own innermost depths, revealing all of my own true features. My body is made pure by this light, so as to "become Acala" in the next, fourth stage of the Lotus Mandala meditation.



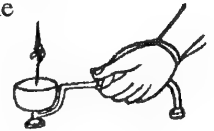
Part 4. One with Acala

The fourth section of the Lotus meditation is divided into sixteen mudra and mantra recitations. The climax of the meditation is the "putting on" of the aspects of Acala, *Fudo Myo-o*. The meditator must follow the instructions of the Ajari master in every precise detail, envisioning in him or herself all of the aspects, paraphernalia, of the great light king Acala. The meditation may be performed interiorly as well as liturgically, in which case, if no incense burner or altar implements are at hand, the details of the meditation can be totally imagined in the mind of the meditator.

I. Prepare the Way.

The meditator picks up the incense burner between both hands, and holding it in front of the chest, moves it to the right in a circle three times, while seeing in the imagination a pathway to be opened and purified for all of the Buddhas of the pure void Dharma world to have access and entrance to the Lotus world. The mantra is recited thrice:

I take refuge in the marvelous (susiddhi) powers of the
Vajra to make a brilliant, thundering light path, to
protect, blazing, binding, beating, Hum! Phat!



II. Become Acala.

Both hands are formed into the anger mudra, bent index and little fingers raised, fire and water fingers bent down over the folded thumbs (see illustration). The mudra is first held to each knee, then the knuckles joined and held to the heart. By reciting the mantra, the meditator sees him or her self become Acala, able to cut away all worldly ties and prevent any thoughts from arising in the heart-mind.

In the name of all Vajras, Kam!
Hail! One with Vajra, Kam!



III. One with Acala's Flames.

The third mudra and mantra cause the flames of Acala to surround one's own body, thus making me able to purify the mandala and the altar of meditation. Form the fire mudra, and press it to the chest, while reciting:

In the name of all Vajras, Ram!
Hail! One with Vajra flames, Ram!



IV. Acala's sword and scabbard.

The fourth eidetic vision represents the high point of the Tantric contemplative tradition, in which the meditator learns the saving compassion mantra of Acala, and the sword-and-scabbard mudra of the Pole Star, shared with the Taoist, Shinto, Shugendo, Yamabushi, and other esoteric movements in Asia. The thumb of left and right hand is pressed down over the fourth and fifth fingers, with the index and third (fire) fingers extended, like a sword. The right hand represents the sword of wisdom that cuts away all thoughts and desires, both good and bad. The left hand represents the scabbard, i.e., the mind and heart of the meditator, made void and empty so as to be filled with samadhi-wisdom. The manner of performing the meditation, reciting the mantra, and moving the mudra belongs to the oral tradition, and must be learned from an Ajari master. The mantra, the same used in the fourth stage of the Goma Fire rite, is as follows:

In the name of all Vajras, Great Fiery-angry one, destroyer of evil! Hum! Trat! Kam! Mam!



The meditation is performed while reciting the mantra and moving the two mudra in the following six stages:

1. Place the scabbard (left hand) on the left knee, and place the sword (right hand) over it, inserting the sword (index and fire fingers) into the scabbard:

2. Envision the hair and braid of Acala on my head. Take the sword from the scabbard, and, imagining the hair of Acala to be piled on my head, slowly bring the scabbard down past the cheek, seeing the braid of Acala hanging down to my left shoulder. Re-insert the sword into the scabbard, and lay both hands on the left knee.

3. Envision my face and body to be Acala. Remove the sword from the scabbard, and hold the scabbard (left hand) against the right nipple, palm facing outward. Now lift the sword (right hand) slowly past the right chin and cheek, and let it rest over the left eye. See how Acala's left eye is half closed. Now envision my face and body to become Acala's.

4. Touch the five places of the body with the tip of the sword, that is, the forehead, right and left shoulder, right and left knee. Recite the mantra for each place touched, and see the armor of Acala placed on one's own body.

5. Bring the sword and scabbard together, and move both hands to the right once in a circle. Insert the sword into the scabbard, and lay both on the knee, without reciting the mantra. Then touch sword and scabbard to the heart, forehead and crown of the head. Bow prostrate to the ground three times, and dissolve the mudra over the head.

6. Join the hands in the prayer mudra, and see my body now totally identified with Acala. Recite the mantra once, seeing all negative thoughts about others, and all judgmental reasoning burned away by Acala's flames.

V. *The Vajra Hand.*



Form the two fists in the vajra mudra, and press them to left and right waist, saying "Hail Vajra fist, Hum!" Then pick up the five pronged vajra in the right hand, and revolve it to the right three times, while saying "Hum! Hum! Hum!"



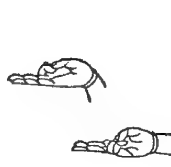
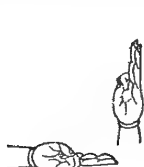
VI. *The Vajra Bell Invites All.*

Pick up the bell in the left hand, and ring it nine times, as in the Eighteen Path Mandala, saying *Ken-da-um* as the bell rings. Envision the tones of the bell to fill the entire lotus world, inviting each worthy to be present for a banquet.



VII. *Invite the Worthies with Acala's Hook.*

In place of the chariot mudra of the Eighteen Path and Goma rites, form the closed fist wind mudra, right index finger extended, symbol of Acala's hook. Recite, "Hail all Ye Buddhas, all Ye indestructible Tathagata, come by this hook to fulfill all Boddhi deeds, Svaha!" The Boddhi deeds are, 1) care for all sentient beings, 2) alleviate all fear, 3) perform meditation 4) see self and all others as equal.





VIII. *Acala's Cord.*

Form the special mudra that binds self to Vairocana, and recite the mantra: "Hail all Buddhas! By this great rope of Acala and thy great magnanimity, may all illness and harm be prevented in the world of sentient beings, by showing total faith in Tathagata Svaha!" See self now bound to all of the worthies in the Lotus world, with the same relationship as they to Vairocana.



IX. *Acala's Lock.*

Form the lock mudra with both fists joined, and recite the mantra: "In the name of all Vajras, Hum! Binding, breaking, Oh Thou born of Vajra, nothing can destroy Thee, Svaha!" See the union of self to Acala and Vairocana to be eternal, nothing can ever tear it away.

X. *Acala's Bell.*

Form the special bell mudra, and now ring the bell symbolically, while reciting the mantra: "Om! Vajra bell, Ken-da-a". Move the hand as if ringing a bell, and see all of the worthies invited by Acala to a banquet within the Lotus world. Note that the four binding mudra and mantra just recited belong to the *Jah! Um! Vam! Koh!* genre of binding mudra used in the Goma fire rite to bind the vision of the spirit in the flames, and here to bind the vision to the self. The hook draws in Acala's image. The rope keeps out external images and binds self to Buddha's mind. The lock preserves the image of Acala within, and the bell welcomes all Buddhas to the banquet.



XI. *Purify the Lotus World Again.*

As the gates of the Lotus world are opened, and the multitude of worthies and outermost layer of spirits enter, the sword mudra of Step Four above is repeated, to purify any impure spirit or thought that may have crept in during the meditation. Repeat the Great Compassion mantra, while performing the mudra:

1. sword and scabbard circle once, then rest on the left knee.
2. scabbard is placed over left breast, sword raised to right forehead, facing outward. Move it to the right in a circle, three times, forbidding any evil demon or impure thought to invade the sacred area during the time that the Buddhas are entering.
3. Move the sword upward and then bring it down, seeing a net cover the sacred area, protecting it from any evil.
4. Touch the five places, then re-insert the sword in the scabbard, on the left knee.
5. leave the sword in the scabbard, and touch both together to the heart and head.
6. Touch the crown of the head, front and back, and bow deeply, dissolving the mudra over the head.



XII. *Manifest Samaya* (Sameness or Oneness with the Lotus).



Hold the folded hands over the top of the head, and recite the samaya mantra, making self, Buddha world, and Lotus mandala one and the same. "In the name of all Buddhas, may they who are not the same, the three together be one and the same, Svaha!"

XIII. *The Offering of Pure Aka Water.*

Pick up the Aka water bowl in the right hand, and purify it by holding it over the incense burner. Then respectfully place it in the left hand, and form the right hand into the sword mudra as above. Recite the Great Compassion Mantra twenty-one times while performing this process (3 x 7). Revolve the sword to the left, then to the right three times each. Then

hold the water bowl between the two hands, formed into the eight petaled lotus mudra. Chant the poem written below, then hold the bowl of water at the head, heart, and belly, while chanting the mantra:

May our bodies, by this pure water
Be washed clean of all stains,
Thus not neglecting (Buddha's) original vows,
Proven within us, all duties fulfilled.



Hail all Buddhas, One and same with the void, Svaha!

The third finger and thumb of the right hand are dipped into the water, and sprinkled three times to dharma, (head), lotus (heart) and vajra (belly level and altar). The Aka is then put down.

XIV. The hands are shaped into the chrysanthemum mudra, and the mantra is repeated, offering the symbolic or phenomenal-dharma aspects of the pure Aka water three times, to Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra worlds.

Hail all Buddhas, One with the Void, Svaha!



XV. The hands are formed into the Lotus mudra, and the meditator sees flowers offered to all the worthies of the Lotus world, as each of the worthies is seated on his or her Lotus throne:

Hail all Buddhas, Ah!



XVI. The fourth stage of the Lotus meditation ends with a brief prayer to all the assembly of worthies in the Lotus Mandala. The hands are formed in the vajra mudra, and the poem recited:

Welcome all thou worthies,
From vows of compassion come,
Down here to this sacred place,
Please, now, take thy thrones,
And accept from us these offerings.



Part 5. The Concluding Meditations of the Lotus-womb World

I. Put on Vajrasattva's Armor.

The fifth stage of the Lotus Meditation begins with the re-affirmation of the purifying power of the sword mudra. The meditator repeats the mantra of compassion, and moves the sword mudra three times to the left and right in a circle, right hand sword inserted into the left hand scabbard. He or she then forms the five pronged vajra mudra, and touches the five places, belly, heart, throat, shoulders, and head. The word *Ken* appears over the head shedding a gold light, while the seed word *Vah* appears in the heart, emitting a bright white light.

A. The meditator changes the vision of Acala into the appearance of Vajrasattva, while reciting the mantra:

In the name of all Vajras, Hum!

Hail all Vajras, Hum!



The meditator is reminded at this point that the Dharma can only be understood when separated from words. The gold and white lights emanating from the Vajra vision empty the mind and heart of all concepts, images, and desires arising from the vision of the Lotus world. The three pronged vajra mudra is circled right three times, then touch the five places. The mantra assists the meditator don the armor of Vajrasattva.

Hail all Vajras, fierce great wrath, Hum!

B. The mudra and mantra of the Lotus Meditation Part One, Sec. 7.4, "Donning the Vajra Armor" is repeated. A blue cord emanating from the finger tips, now ties the armor of Vajrasattva to the twelve places of the body:

Om! Vajra Armor, Hum!

As the armor is tied to each of the twelve places (See Page 6, above) the words Om! Ton! are repeated. When completed, the right hand points to the ground, recalling how after the Buddha's enlightenment and attainment of spiritual insight, the evil temptress Mara appeared from the earth in sensuous vision. The evil to be expelled now is the pride that the vision of heavenly things can cause. If the vision of the Lotus world, or the heavenly worthies makes us lose compassion, then all of the meditations of Lotus and Vajra worlds are wasted. As the mantra is recited, a bright gold net covers the Lotus world, protecting it from all thoughts of pride and spiritual superiority. Demons are empowered by the mind's visions of self-perfection. The mantra is called "The Medicine of the Immortal of the Western Heavens," i.e., the vision of Amida's light flooding from the western heavens, not my own power, brings enlightenment.

Hail all Buddhas! Oh Thou of great strength

Who has attained the ten powers, show forth

Thy Great compassion, Svaha!



C. The vision of Bhṛkūṭi is now seen, an avatar or type of angry Avalokitesvara, with a violent countenance and four arms, each with a different mudra (beads, vows fulfilled, lotus, vase). The Ajari master explains at this point that the vision of Amida,

Avalokitesvara (Kannon) and Buddha Locana are different aspects of a Buddha. The meditator must not be attached to any image, but see each part of the mandala as related to the whole.

D. The vision of the total Lotus world is now before the meditator, who has realized the presence of the mandala within his or her body. But the awakening to the Lotus must not be ephemeral, a brief encounter with a world of iconographic splendor. The interior palace of transcendent, void presence, (the word *Le Luppuri* palace is used to symbolize the void lotus) must now be cleansed of all images and seed words. The special vajra purifying mudra is formed, and the mantra of cleansing recited:

In the name of all Buddhas,
Oh Le Luppuri palace,
Be cleansed, no image, Svaha!

The Lotus World has now become a void and pure palace, with no image and no seeds of thought remaining.

II. Locking the Gates to the Lotus Mandala

A. The meditator sees the four great guardians, the *Shitenno* 四天王 at the four gateways to the mandala, who hasten to close the doors so that the state of void sunya in the Lotus world never be lost. The final meditation takes place in two stages: 1) The four great kings at the four gates are seen to repeat the words of cleansing purification. 2) Then Acala locks the gates, so that no thought and no desire may arise therein. The mudra of locking is repeated four times, sealing the heart of the lotus. The Lotus World has become a source of eternal enlightenment.

1. Envision the Guardian of the East, Jikokuten (Dhrtarastra), "No Fear." Form the mudra, and revolve it to the right and left, three times each, then touch the five places, and recite the mudra:

Hail all Buddhas, Va!
Le Luppuri Palace,
Clean, pure, Svaha!



Visualize the self standing in the center of the Lotus, and look out the East gate of the mandala. There see the seed word *Va* above an open lotus flower. The word changes into the great protector guardian Jikokuten, who destroys all fear. His body is gold and his robes are bright white. He has an angry expression, and carries a staff in the right hand.

2. Envision the Guardian of the North, Tamonten (Vaisravana). Also called Bishamonten, he destroys all evil. Form the mudra, and revolve it to the right and left three times, then touch the five places and say:

Hail all Buddhas, Vah!
Le Luppuri palace,
Clean, pure, Svaha!



Envision an open lotus in the middle of the north gate, atop which is the seed word *Vah*. The word changes into Tamonten, (Vaisravana) or Bishamon, Protector from all evil. His body and clothes are a bright white. He holds a sword in his right hand and a stupa in his left.

3. Envision the Guardian of the West, Komokuten (Virupaksa) who stops sorrow. Form the mudra, and move it the left and right three times, then touch the five places while reciting:

Hail all Buddhas Sah!

Le Luppuri palace

Clean, pure, Svaha!



See an open lotus flower in the center of the west gate, over which is the seed word *Sah*. It changes into the great protector from suffering Komokuten (Virupaksa). His body is the color of pink, like a flower free of all sorrow. His clothes are crimson, and in his right hand he holds a vajra spear.

4. Envision the Guardian of the South, Zojoten (Virudhaka) who prevents all harshness and anger. Form the mudra and revolve it to the left and right three times, then touch the five places and say:

Hail all Buddhas, Kam! Ken!

Le Luppuri palace,

Clean, pure, Svaha!



See an open lotus in the middle of the south gate, over which are the two seed words *Kam* and *Ken*. The words turn into the Great Protector from all harshness and anger, Zojoten (Virudhaka) whose face resembles the image of Bhrikuti, seen above. His body is dark in color, and his clothes are a deep black. He wears a flanged helmet. His left fist is pressed to the waist, and in his right hand he holds a tancha sword.

B. The gates of the Lotus world are now locked and bolted, showing the immense difference between the spirit of the Womb-Lotus, and the male Vajra. The Lotus is female, a womb from which enlightenment is gestated, and therefore a place to be carefully sealed off and protected from all impurities and worldly evil. The meditation of the Lotus world is performed first in the Tendai tradition, because the meditator must be first filled with the selfless wisdom of compassion, as proof of true enlightenment. Only after wisdom and compassion are fixed deeply in my own heart can I step forth and do the deeds of a Buddha in the exterior world. The Vajra world meditation is then performed, in which the blessings received from the Lotus are given away to all sentient beings. The philosophy of Sunya emptying is thus practically realized in the two tantric meditations.

1. The four gates are first locked with the special mudra of protection, formed by inserting the index finger of the right hand into the closed left fist, then bolted by inserting the index finger of the left hand into the closed right fist. The meditator sees him or herself again changed into the countenance of Acala, to perform the mudra and mantra of locking. The sequence is repeated four times, once for each of the four gates, to the east, north, west, and south of the mandala. The point of the meditation is to realize that the Lotus world is preserved interiorly by keeping the vajra vow of compassion exteriorly, i.e., the vow of Amida-Vairocana to alleviate the suffering and save all sentient beings. The countenance of Acala is seen to radiate bright red and white flames, as the mantra is recited:

Hail all Vajras!

Oh Thou who cannot bear to see suffering,

Great fierce one (Acala), devour,

Fulfill all the Tathagata vows,
for all of us, let it be done, Svaha!



The right index finger is inserted into the left fist, and turned to the right, locking the gate.

2. The gates are next bolted, with the following mantra:

Hey! Now for the other side!



Great violent fierce one, devour, digest, hurry,

Why so slow! Fulfill the original vow, remember, Svaha!

The left index finger is inserted into right fist, and turned to the left, bolting the gate.

III. *The Concluding Rites.*

The sixth, seventh, and eighth stages of the Lotus meditation are a reversal of the Eighteen Path mandala, as in Chapter One, pages 9-14, and page 31 above.

A. The six visible gifts, representing concrete deeds of compassion, and the six symbolic mudra representing the six paramitas of wisdom are offered, the meditation on the Dharma, Reward, and Response body of Vairocana, are repeated.

B. The meditation on the Lotus stupa, Chapter Two part 7 is also repeated, and the structure of the entire Lotus Mandala slowly and thoroughly contemplated. The samadhi posture of Zen meditation is assumed, right palm over left, thumbs touching. The meditator and Vairocana have the same posture, are in fact the same person. As the closing lines of the Eighteen Path Mandala are recited, the meditator is reminded to "go forth and do deeds of compassion," if the Lotus meditation was truly meaningful.



III. THE VAJRA THUNDER MEDITATION

Part 1. Purification

I. The Vajra Mandala meditation begins with the purification and Eighteen Path mandala meditations as in Chapters I and II above, except for the following changes:

A. Use the mantra of Trailokyavijaya, i.e., Nisumbha (Jpn.: Gozanze) to bless the water and offerings:

Om Nisumbha vajra, Hum!



B. Bless the offerings with the three pronged vajra in the right hand, left fist to the waist:

Om Nisumbha Vajra Hum!



C. Visualize the Buddhas of the Vajra Mandala, instead of the Lotus and Goma worlds:

Kham! Vajra World Mandala!



Lift the head and look at the hanging mandala scroll; or envision the mandala in the imagination, in the sky directly above the meditator. Visualize each Buddha, from the center, through the right to the left sides, in clockwise fashion moving outward.

D. Awaken the Buddhas of the Vajra World. Form the Vajra awakening mudra, i.e., little fingers intertwined, index fingers extended and touching, thumbs tucked under the third and fourth fingers, bent in a fist. Recite the mudra three times, seeing each of the Buddhas of the Vajra world awaken and begin to move and talk (eidetic or moving vision):

Hail, Vajra world, awake! Hum!

E. Pay obeisance to the four Buddhas of the Vajra center. Bow to each of the four Buddhas that surround Vairocana Buddha, in the center of the Vajra, beginning with the bottom or east side, and moving counter clockwise to the north or right side.

1. *The Buddha of the East*, Aksobhya (Ashuku). Imagine that in my heart there is the seed word *Hum*, emanating a bright yellow color. See it change and become a five pronged wisdom vajra. Then see my own body change into the five wisdom vajra, so that each particle of dust in my body is permeated with Vajrasattva, (i.e., *Ashuku*, (Aksobhya). Then visualize offering my body entirely to Aksobhya, and all of the Buddhas of the eastern sector, while reciting the mantra:

Hail, All Tathagatas! In your service

Take my body as an offering.

All Tathagata Vajra protect me, Hum!



2. *The Buddha of the South*, Ratna Sambhava (Hosho). Imagine that the seed word *Trah* is directly above my forehead, a deep blue-black color. See it change and become a Vajra jewel. Then see that my body too changes so that each particle of dust within me is permeated by Vajra-ratna, the Vajra Jewel; that is, I have put on the aspects of Vajrasattva, Ratna Sambhava Buddha. Then envision the offering of my body completely to Ratna Sambhava and all of the Buddhas of the southern sector, while reciting the mantra:

Hail all Tathagatas, puja ordained, we offer ourselves.

All ye Tathagatas, Consecrate us! Trah!



3. *The Buddha of the West*, Amida of Immeasurable Life. Visualize that in the mouth there is the seed word *Hrih*. It is red in color, and it changes into an eight-petaled Lotus Blossom. See my body also change into an eight-petaled lotus, so that each particle of dust within me is permeated with the the Vajra Dharma of Amida. Then chant the mantra, seeing my body and all of my abilities completely offered to Amida and the Buddhas of the western sector:

Hail all tathagatas! For an on-going puja,
Take me as an offering.
Oh all ye Tathagatas, Oh Vajra Dharma,
Mam. Hrih! Revolve me! Hrih!



4. *The Buddha of the North*, Amogha Siddhi (Fuku-joju). See at the crown of the head the seed word *Ah*, shining with a bright white light. See the seed word change and become Vajra-karma, Vajra-doer. My body also changes into Vajrakarma, so that each particle of dust within me is permeated with Amogha Siddhi. Then chant the mantra, seeing my whole body and all its powers given to Amogha Siddhi and the Buddhas of the northern sector as an offering:

Hail all Tathagatas!
For puja deeds, take me as an offering.
Oh all Tathagatas, into Vajra Karma,
Convert my deeds. Ah!



F. Perform the Grand Mudra of the Vajra Holder. First, kneel on the right knee, form the vajra clasped hands mudra, then separate the palms, and hold them over the head, as if putting a vajra crown on the top of the head. Recite the phrase *Om Vajra Vih* ("Hail, Vajra victor!"), then hold the palms outward, parallel to each other, and move them to the height of the chest. First, move the right hand in a circle three times, then move the left hand in a circle three times, as if dancing. While performing the mudra, visualize self becoming Vairocana Tathagata. Recite the mantra three times, as follows:

Hail all Tathagatas, with body, mouth, mind.
Vajra ritual, let us do it! Hail, Vajra Victor!



When finished, tuck the right knee back into the half lotus position, and join the two hands in the vajra-anjali mudra. Meditate on the self made one with Vairocana, and breathe in the the light issuing from Vairocana's headpiece, circulating it through the body, as breath. Experience joy in this first visual union with Vajra wisdom. Then continue with the Eighteen Path mandala, substituting Trailokyavijaya for the name of Acala in the text.

G. *Chant in Honor of the Vajra World Buddhas.*

All hail Oh thou eternal resident of the Three Worlds, pure,
Wondrous Dharmakaya, Vajra World Great Compassionate Vairocana!
All hail Oh Vajra-strength self-arisen body, Aksobhya Buddha!
All hail Oh blessed, finely adorned body, Ratna Sambhava Buddha!
All Hail Oh wisdom body, received to help others, Amida Buddha!
All Hail Oh bringer of change, transformed body Sakyamuni Buddha!
Hail thou four Paramita Bodhisattva worthies!
Hail thou sixteen Bodhisattva worthies!
Hail thou eight Puja Bodhisattva worthies!

Hail thou four helpers of wisdom Boddhisattva worthies!
Hail Oh all thou Buddhas and Boddhisattvas of the Vajra World!

H. The five repentances.

Form the Vajra-anjali mudra, and see oneself bowing down to the feet of the five central Buddhas, grasping their knees in sorrow and repentance.

1. First, recite the verses of obeisance and respect:

I take refuge in all the Buddhas of the Ten directions,
Most victorious wondrous Dharma enlightened multitude.
By thy doing, body, mouth, and mind are purified;
Profoundly moved, I clasp my hands and bow in respect.
I take refuge and bow my head in obeisance to the great
compassionate, Vairocana Buddha!



2. Next, recite the prayer of repentance:

Oh all of ye in the midst of beginningless revolving,
From body, mouth and mind's deeds, so many sins born!
Let us join with Buddha and Boddhisattva's repentance,
Let us now be like them, our sorrow one with theirs,
Take refuge and bow our heads in obeisance to
The Great, Compassionate Vairocana Buddha!

3. Last, Hymn of Joy in following the Buddha:

Now let us again respond with joy from heart's depths.
A joy gained from all the blessing of wisdom attained!
All Buddhas and Boddhisattvas are now fulfilling vows,
Of bearing in us the blessing of the three Vajra deeds.
To cause awakening, hear their words, sentient ones!
They are the root of good attained; follow their joy!
Take refuge and bow in respect to the Great,
Compassionate, Vairocana Buddha!

4. Invite the Buddhas to be present:

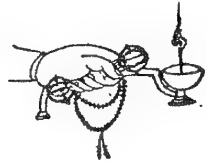
Again let us envision each Buddhas seated in the Mandala.
I personally invite each one to spin the Dharma wheel,
Each and every light of the world to sit in the mandala.
Awaken eyes, open the gates, shine on the three realms!
I here, today, bend my knees and first do thou invite,
To spin the highest, wondrous wheel of the Law.
All of ye Tathagata, masters of the Three Worlds,
Approach together, do not hold back, O enlightened ones.
I invite you all today to be eternally present,
Never forget thy compassionate vows to save the world.
Take refuge and bow in respect to the Great Compassionate
Vairocana Buddha.

5. Pronounce the Vajra vows:

Come oh ye blessing of repentance and joy,
Let us never lose the Bodhi enlightened heart-mind.
May each Buddha and Boddhisattva, wondrous multitude all,
Always be our best of friends, never cast us aside.
Help us leave the eight hardships, born with no distress.
May our destiny be to dwell in wisdom, body thus adorned,
Parted from life's allurements, taste compassion's wisdom
At last fulfilling the ability to pass to the other shore
Of abundant joy, richly nourished, born in Buddha's race.
May the holy ones be constant, warm, fulfilling family,
Bringing to us the *four unhindered ways of speaking* (know
the dharma, understand their meaning, able to speak in
any language, and joy for those who listen to us teach),
And the *Ten Self-possessed Freedoms* (acts, heart & mind,
appearances, deeds, birth, attachments, desires, spiritu-
al power, Dharma, wisdom), the *Six Transcendental facul-*
ties, (to go anywhere, see anywhere, hear from great dis-
tances, know others thoughts, past lives, destroy passion),
and bring to fulfillment our ability for *Zen* meditation.
Just as Vajra Banner and Samantabhadra have done, we too
Vow that all merit (of the Tathagata) be given to all,
By homage and praise to Great Compassionate Vairocana!

I. The meditator now takes the beads, single-pronged vajra, and hand held in-
cense burner in the left hand, strikes the chime with the right hand, then with implements
grasped in both hands chants the vows of the Vajra Mandala World:

With upright heart I make these vows,
Promising solely to Vairocana,
And the whole Vajra world mandala,
The nine assemblies of the cakra altar,
The four Buddhas of the four passageways,
The eight offerings, the four assistants,
The sixteen Great Boddhisattva,
The Teacher who orders the body transformed,
Gozanze (Trailokyavijaya) Master,
Four Great, Eight great, All the Great Angry Ones
The worthies of the Eighteen Assemblies,
All the holy ones of the outer Vajra wall,
They who protect the Dharma, heavenly horde,
May they all repeat their original vows,
Come down here, now, to this sacred area
And partake of these Puja offerings.
Protect us, children of Buddha, may all the good



Vowed in our hearts, be fulfilled, completed,
Fill the entire Dharma world, equally helping all!

J. Continuing to hold incense, beads, and vajra, pronounce the Five Great Vows of the Boddhisattva (as in Chapter I, pages 8-9).

K. Contemplation on the Four Immeasurable Minds.

1. The immeasurable mind of kindness. Envision one's mind to be filled with the immeasurable pure and gentle kindness of Samantabhadra (*Fugen*). See that the six realms of rebirth (deva, human, animal, preta, asura, demon) and the four kinds of arising birth (womb, egg, moisture-born, and avatar or transformed body) all sentient beings have within themselves the original nature of a Tathagata, a potential realized by oneness with the Boddhisattva *Fugen* and *Maitreya*.

O Great Maitreya, pervade me!

2. The immeasurable mind of compassion. Envision all sentient beings to be filled with loving compassion. Even though the six realms of rebirth and the four kinds of arising birth, all sentient beings are immersed and sinking in the sea of life and death, still each one has within the depths of its own being the nature of Akasagharba, the Vajra Storehouse *Kokuzo Bosatsu*. Then recite the mantra, begging that all sentient beings achieve union with Akasagharba.

Oh Great compassion, pervade!

3. The immeasurable mind of Joy. Next one must see the mind purified and cleansed, by reason of which the six realms of rebirth and the four kinds of arising birth, all sentient beings, are purified and cleansed. This is because in the depths of their being they have the potency to be a true dharma storehouse. Thereupon recite the mantra, praying that all sentient beings may experience union with Avalokitesvara, Kanjizai Bosatsu.

O wondrous joy, pervade!

4. The immeasurable mind of equanimity. See, with a mind of equanimity, that all sentient beings, the six paths and the four arising births, are separate from "me" and "mine", and that in the depths of their being they are in fact one with the marvelous Dharma storehouse. Now chant the mantra, praying that each and every sentient being realize oneness with the void, empty storehouse Vajra-sattva Boddhisattva.

O great relinquishing, pervade!

This concludes Part One of the Vajra Mandala meditation.



Samantabhadra



Akasagharba



Avalokitesvara



Vajrasattva

Part 2. Enter the Vajra Mandala

In the second stage of the Vajra Mandala liturgy, the meditator uses mental visualization, mantric chant, and mudra hand dance to progress through the ninth, eighth, and seventh halls of the Vajra world. These are 9) the Hall of Trailokyavijaya's *samaya* symbols, 8) the Hall of Identification with Trailokyavijaya, (*Gozanze*), and 7) the *Naya* (Jpn: Rishyu) Hall of mental purification. The liturgy begins with a six step visualization in which the meditator assumes in eidetic vision the aspects of Vajrasattva, the disciple of Vairocana Buddha.

I. *Vajra Eyes Meditation.*

See the seed word *Ma* over the right eye, which changes and becomes a moon. Then see the seed word *Ta* over the left eye which also changes and becomes the sun. Form the left and right hands into a fist with the thumbs tucked under the fingers. Press the left fist to the left eye, and right fist to right eye. See a five pronged vajra light shoot forth from each eye into outer space. Leap onto the light, and ride it into outer space, and see all of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, the multitudes of the Vajra world, to be filled with joy and happiness. Return the fists to the waist, and holding them there. See this meditation as a purifying dharma, that offers the self as a concrete purified offering, freed from all stain and dirt, cut off from worldly ties. See the self offering garlands of flowers and incense to all of the Buddhas, while reciting the mantra:

Hail, Oh Vajra Eyes, Ma-Ta!



II. *The Vajra-anjali mudra.*

Join the hands joined with fingers upright and intertwined. This is the basic mudra for the vajra meditations. The left hand represents Zen or Samatha concentration, and the right hand represents Vipasyana or emptying wisdom. The ten fingers are symbols of the ten crossings (paramitas, or connectors to the Buddha-Vajra world): 1) the altar, 2) the precepts, 3) forbearance, 4) striving, 5) Zen meditation, 6) understanding, 7) *upaya* skillful means, 8) vows, 9) strength, and 10) wisdom. The mudra symbolizes that I am only able to have these virtues by realizing that I am united with the Buddha nature, not by any striving on my own. A gold light emanates from the mudra, covering my body and protecting it, like a statue of the Buddha covered in gold, from worldly desires and attachments. Recite the mantra:

Hail, Oh Vajra palms!



III. *Vajra Bonds.*

Pull the fingers down over the fists, seeing all bonds to the desires, glories, and praise of the world thereby cut off, and self bound instead to oneness with the vajra world.

Hail, Vajra Bonds!



IV. *Open the heart.*

Next, lift the fingers so that they extend upwards at a 45 degree angle. Hold this mudra first to the right nipple, and see the seed word *Trah* there. Then move the mudra to the left nipple, and see the seed word *Ta* imprinted there. Then bring the mudra to the center of the chest, and pull the hands apart like a door opening. Recite the mantra three times:

Hail Vajra Gates, Open!



See the heart, closed off by the former Lotus World meditation, now about to open. The three obstacles, mind, deeds, and suffering are obliterated, and the three sources of karmic deeds, body, mouth, and mind, are purified.



V. *Summon wisdom into the heart.*

Envision an open lotus in front of the heart with the seed word *Ah* on top of it. Using the above mudra, pull the fingers down over the fists, and tuck the thumbs inside the closed fist three times, seeing the seed word *Ah* and the lotus to be drawn inside me. The lotus and the seed word glow with a brilliant pink and gold light, which diffuses and fills my body with breath, as it enters inside me. Recite the mantra three times:

Hail Vajra, enter Ah!



VI. *Close the Gateway to the Heart.*

With the thumbs still tucked inside the fists, pull down the index fingers over the thumbs, locking them inside. See the entrance to the heart closed, so that wisdom will never again leak out, or depart from me. Recite the mantra three times:

Hail Vajra clenched fist! Vam!

VII. Enter the ninth hall of the Vajra Mandala, the Samaya Assembly of Gozanze and Fugen (Trailokyavijaya and Samantabhadra), who purify and enlighten the meditator as he/she enter the Vajra Mandala. The hall consists of a series of symbols (samaya) which purify the mind of words, logical reasoning, and attachment to ideas. Note that the motion of the Vajra Mandala meditation is counterclockwise, i.e., it proceeds from the bottom right hand corner upwards in a counter-clockwise direction to union with Vairocana in the center of the mandala.

A. The two figures of Gozanze (Trailokyavijaya) and Fugen (Samantabhadra) dwell in the ninth hall. See oneself become one with and united to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. See that Samantabhadra (Fugen) is in fact an aspect of Vajrasattva, the disciple of Vairocana. He holds a five-pronged vajra bell in his left hand, pressed to the waist, and a five-pronged vajra in his right hand, pressed to his heart, and sits inside a moon cakra. See him as if in a mirror in front of oneself, as a reflection of the self. Now recite the mantra three times, saying:

Hail symbol, I and Thou One!



B. The visual union of self with Vajrasattva brings to me the realization that the nature of the Tathagata and all sentient beings is the same; that is, I now am one with the Tathagata's vow to enlighten and save all sentient beings, to burn away the worries of all sentient beings, and awaken all sentient beings to enlightenment.

C. The Ninth Hall is an Assembly of Wondrous Joy. Press in the middle fingers so that they point downward beneath the folded palms. Press this mudra, like an arrow, to the heart, thereby destroying all intellectual images and willed desires. The arrow destroys both vehicles, Theravada and Mahayana, and by thus emptying the heart-mind of all words, images and desires, brings about great interior peace and joy. Recite the mantra three times saying:

Om! Hoh! One with great joy!



VIII. Enter the Eighth Hall.

Enter the Eighth Hall of Trailokyavijaya, and become Gozanze. Cross the right hand over the left, and attach the two little fingers by hooking them together. Imagine that the two index fingers are the protruding teeth of Gozanze (see illustration). Move the fingers by pulling them inward and outward, and envision the body of Fugen (Samantabhadra) to change and become the terrifying body of Gozanze (Trailokyavijaya).

A. See Gozanze dancing in front of me, with eight arms and four heads portraying laughter, anger, fear, and terror. Four teeth (two upper and lower) protrude from his mouth. His body is surrounded by roaring flames. The left leg is extended straight outward, and the right leg is bent, trampling over the sky. Move the mudra to the right nipple, left nipple, point to the earth, then touch the heart, shoulders, throat, and crown of the head, finally dissolving the mudra over the top of the head as the mudra ends:

Hail Sumbha Nisumbha Hum!

Away, Away, Hum!

Depart all evil, Hum!

Come save us, Hoh!

Oh Honored Vajra, Hum! Purify!



B. While reciting the last line, revolve the mudra to the right three times, purifying heaven and earth; then to the left three times, to enlighten all sentient beings. Then touch the four places, i.e., heart, shoulders, throat, and forehead. Dissolve the mudra over the head.

C. The Lotus-stupa symbol. Form the Great Sword Stupa mudra, the third "fire" fingers bent at the top joint and touching, index fingers extended, right thumb over left, symbolizing the vajra stupa that arises out of a Lotus. Hold the mudra slightly above the forehead, and see my body become Avalokitesvara, (Kanjizai Bosatsu), who holds a lotus bud in the left hand and a Dharma wheel in the right (between the index and little fingers). Press the mudra to the belly, and recite the mantra three times, seeing that my original nature is purified by the power of the Vajra-stupa sword.

Hail Vajra-stupa, We are one, I and Thou!



D. The Dharma Wheel. Keeping the hands joined, fold down the index and third fingers, and bring up the little fingers so that they cross in an upright position. Envision the mudra to be a Dharma wheel, which revolves and burns away all the Alaya seed-conscious mind, and all attachments to the Theravada and Mahayana vehicles. Move the mudra three times to the right in front of the heart, and see the Dharma wheel to be spun by Gozanze, while the light issuing from his vajra hand purifies me from all desires and instills in me the thirty-seven seeds (preparation for the thirty-seven Buddhas) of the Vajra world meditation.

Hail, Takki (Gozanze) destroyer,

Great desire-free Vajra, Thou who truly

grasps the Vajra, Thah! (spin the wheel).



IX. Enter the Hall of Transcendent Desire.

Envision the Eighth Hall of the Naya (Lady Buddha) Assembly. The meditator now enters the Seventh Hall of the Vajra World, the Rishyu Assembly of Void Wisdom. First, gaze on the Naya World (Rishyu) Mandala, and realize that all sentient beings enter the Buddha world, and cross over to the other shore, not by any merits of their own, but solely by the great, purifying vajra light. By virtue of the vajra power alone are they able to attain to the wisdom mind, and leave behind worldly love and desire. The one great desire is therefore to be void of desire, to be one with *Aizen Myo-o*, the spirit of mystic love, ruler of the Naya Assembly. He/she is the Buddha who purifies the soul of desire.

A. Form the mudra by folding the fingers down over the closed fists, and tuck the right thumb over the left into the interior of the closed fist. Recite the mantra three times, while pressing the right thumb into the interior three times:

Hail wondrous pleasure, Vajra,

Hook! Enter! Bind! Joy!

I and Thou, Thou and I, same!



B. The Great Joy of Entry into the Naya Hall. As the meditator enters the Naya Hall, i.e., the Rishyu Assembly, he/she sees that mind and heart must be emptied of all Dharma, thoughts, and desires. Envision all sentient beings, by the grace and power of Gozanze, to quickly prove the power of the Tathagata by realizing within themselves the Grand Enlightenment of compassion, i.e., self-emptying wisdom. The Great Desire for compassionate wisdom is realized by union with Vajrasattva-Aizen. Use the same mudra as above, but leave the right thumb within the closed fist, without moving. Recite the mantra once:

Oh great joyful Vajra,

Realized for all sentient beings,

Hook! Enter! Bind! Joy in them!

Wondrous Joy! I and Thou One!



C. Summon forth all the transgressions of all sentient beings. Envision that all sins, transgressions, and guilt for them are purified by the power of Aizen Vajrasattva. Form the mudra by extending the middle fire fingers straight upward, like a sword. Then bring the index fingers up to touch the first joint of the third fingers. All of the sins and transgressions are seen to be summoned by moving the index fingers up and down, as if summoning them to be impaled on the sword of Vajrasattva.

D. See a huge black cloud, as of all evil demons, my sins, and guilt for them, as well as the transgressions of all sentient beings, arising from the three sources of evil (mind, mouth, body) to be impaled on the Vajra sword. Recite the mantra, feeling great sorrow for sins but compassion for the transgressors:

Hail, all guilt, be pulled here!

Purify it, Oh Vajrasattva!

By being one with it! Hum! Phat!



E. Crush the transgressions. Pull down the index fingers from the previous mudra, and press the fingers and thumbs inside the fist, leaving the third fire fingers extended as a sword. The fingers and thumbs inserted inside the fist represent all transgressions and

guilt, which will be purified and destroyed from within the Naya (Rishyu) assembly. See the black cloud of guilt and sin to be pressed inside the closed fist, and annihilated by a white light emanating from the center of the Rishyu hall. Breathe this white light inside my body, thus purifying it by the power of Vajrasattva and the Naya assembly. Recite the mantra, and upon reaching the final mantric seed words *Hum! Tra! Ta!*, snap the extended third fingers three times, seeing all guilt for transgressions dissolved:

Oh Vajra hand, conquer, destroy,
 From all evil bonds and ties,
 From all evil conditions, release us!
 Make all sentient beings, all Tathagatas
 One with Vajra! Hum! Trah! Ta!



F. Purification of Karmic Impediments. Form the great wisdom sword mudra, by pressing the index fingers over the upright thumbs, and crossing the extended third, fourth, and fifth fingers. Recite the mantra, and see that all of the obstacles created by my actions is destroyed by the light of the Vajra.

Hail vajra deeds washed clean
 by the all-encircling protector!
 One with the true Buddha, Hum!



Touch the mudra to the right ear, and visualize a great lotus, symbol of compassion, to fill the heart and cleanse it of all karmic remains, and obstacles to enlightenment.

G. Achieving Enlightenment. Leave the little fingers and thumbs extended and touching, while folding down the index, third, and fourth fingers over the knuckles. Touch the left side of the head, completing the second stage of the Vajra meditation with an *abhiseka* or consecration of the self by anointing with Vajra light. See a moon with a lotus inside pass into the body from the left side of the head, filled with the Lady Wisdom Vajra, a female Amida. This vision is called the moon Amida, or the Lady Amida. Recite the mantra:

Hail, moon above, blessings given for all,
 Oh great lady Vajra, Hum!



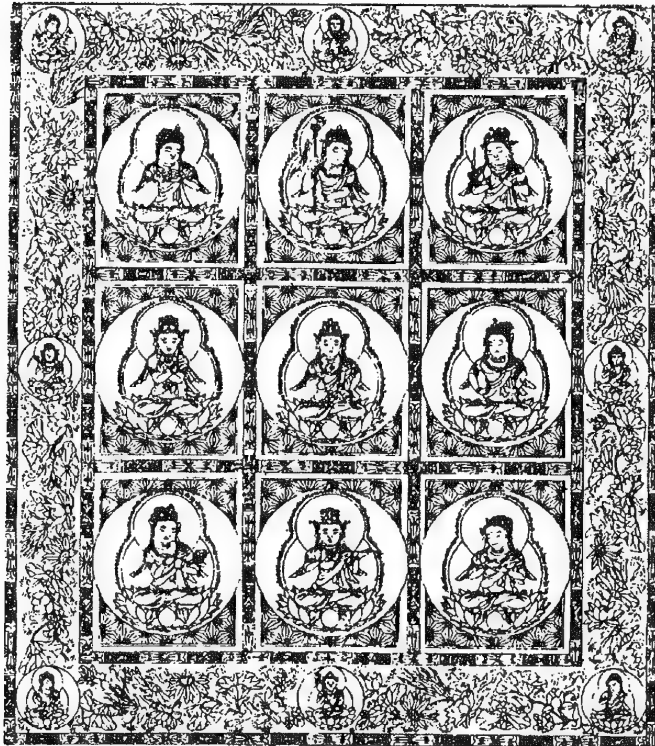
H. Form the samadhi mudra. Precepts fulfilled, mind and heart emptied, meditate for a moment on the Rishyu-kai mandala. The meditator here pauses to gaze at the Naya Assembly, i.e., the Rishyu Kai, seeing each of the Vajra images therein to be joined in union to me, through mudra, mantra, and eidetic visualization. By the power of Aizen Vajrasattva in the center, and each of the aspects of the vajra depicted in the mandala, the four passions (desire, pleasure, love, ecstasy) are totally purified and the intellect emptied of all hindering thought. The seventeen images of the Rishyu-kai are as follows:

1. Center, Vajrasattva (Kongosatta) Pure Love.
2. East, Istvara (Yokukongo, or Ishokongo) will and intellect.
3. South, Kelikilavajra (Shokukongo) sensuous touch.
4. West, Ragavajra (Aikongo) sensual love.
5. North, manavajra (Mankongo) delight.
6. Southeast, Manojavajrini (Yokukongonyo) lady desire.
7. Southwest, Kelikilavajrini (Shokukongonyo) lady touch.



8. Northwest, Ragavajrini (Airakukongonyo) lady love.
9. Northeast, Manavajrini (Mankongonyo) lady delight.
10. Vajralasi (Kongoki Bosatsu) dance.
11. Vajramala (Kongoman Bosatsu) garland.
12. Vajragita (Kongoka Bosatsu) song.
13. Vajranrtya (Kongobu Bosatsu) dance.
14. Vajrankuca (Kongoku Bosatsu) enticement.
15. Vajrapaca (Kongosaku Bosatsu) ensnare.
16. Vajrasphota (Kongosa Bosatsu) lock.
17. Vajraveca (Kongorei Bosatsu) bell.

The meditator has now purified all thoughts, desires, sensuous attractions, and impulses for physical love. In the tradition of the mystics, the human impulses, mind, mouth, and body are filled only with love and attraction for the sacred. In the Tantric Buddhist sense, the empty, void, transcendent, other shore, symbolized by Vairocana in his/her many manifestations, is now the object of the meditator's entire attention, symbolized by the feminine aspects of the Naya world Buddhas.



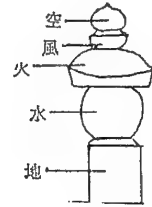
Part 3. Enter the Void

In the third phase of the Vajra ritual, the meditator passes through the sixth and fifth halls of the mandala, that is, union with Vairocana and the four central Buddha images surrounding him, and comes to rest in the third hall of Puja offerings, and the second hall of pure, undefiled wisdom. The goal of the third part of the meditation is to receive an *abhiseka* ordination or consecration from Vairocana, and then empty the self totally by "giving away" the merits gained by the meditations, to enlighten all sentient beings. The process of enlightenment is clearly based on a compassion that gives away everything to totally empty the self.

I. The Single Mudra Hall.

The first of the meditation takes place in the Single Mudra Assembly, *Ichin-kai*, at the top (west) of the mandala. The meditator assumes the mudra of Samadhi (Zen) meditation, fingers intertwined, palms up, thumbs touching, and the third "fire" fingers bent upward and touching the thumbs. The mudra is placed in the lap, and the vision of the stupa is seen to arise in the center of the palms. The five segments of the stupa symbolize the five signs of Buddhahood attained:

- 1) Square (base), awakened, earth.
- 2) Circle, purified, water.
- 3) Triangle, firmed, fire.
- 4) Quarter moon, pervading, wind.
- 5) Stupa crown, become one, space.



A. The meditator considers the following text:

Clearly see that all Dharma nature originates from within the mind. Worries piled upon worries, from the worldly cares and the desire to enter therein. All are a phantom, a flickering flame, like the Castle of Gandarva, or a burning wheel of fire, an echo from an empty valley. If in this Samadhi vision of self, you do not see into your own body and mind, then dwell a while in stillness and extinction, and in the end, you will know true wisdom! If indeed you can peer into the center of the void, see how all the Buddhas, numerous as sesame seeds, fill the limits of the great void realm! See one's body as proof of the ten Buddha paths; [Envision, work for, welcome, honor, call on, understand, rely on, offer to, respond to, pray to Buddha]. Dwell in the void between Dharma (mind) and reality. All of the Tathagatas of this empty realm, snap their fingers to awaken and enlighten us! Announce to all good disciples, give proof of what is awakened in you! A single path, of pure simplicity. Not even by Vajra Yoga practice, nor by all kinds of wisdom, can the above experience be attained. But do not be proud of this one experience; we must be filled with Samantabhadra's wisdom. Only then can we attain the highest true awakening, When body and mind are stilled, unmoved! From samadhi's depths we bow to the Buddhas. Hail, all ye Tathagata, Let us now bow at your feet!

B. The meditator now perceives him or herself to put on the five aspects of Vairocana, who is seated alone in the center of the One Mudra Hall:

1. *Penetration of the Bodhi enlightened heart-mind.*

O practitioner, when you experience this startling awakening from Samadhi's depths, pay universal homage (to the Vajra world) saying:

My only wish is that all the Tathagatas
Might manifest themselves here before me
As I perform these Sadhana prayers and offerings.

All of the (Vajra world) responds with one voice:

You must gaze into your own heart-mind!

And when you have heard these words,
Just as told, gaze into your own heart,
And gaze at length in a state of inner peace,
Repeatedly envision self prostrate at Buddha's feet.
Pray without ceasing to the Most Victorious Worthy,
Saying, "I do not see my own heart-mind,
For what characteristics indeed does it have?"

Then all of the Buddhas respond, saying:

Ah, mind hard to measure, depths hard to plumb,
Give thy heart instead these mantric seed words,
And let it sing until it is filled with light.

Now see the heart as a full moon, and the seed word

Ah floating there, as it were, in a sea of mist.

Understand, at last, inner contemplation's source.

Hail, mind-heart piercing (Vajra), penetrate me!



2. *The Untainted Mind.*

The meditator reflects that the storehouse consciousness, by origin unstained, was pure and clean, nothing false or evil therein. Now, if we realize the blessing of wisdom's presence in the heart-mind kept like a pure round moon, and repeatedly perform the meditation of emptying, what external things can ever harm us? Worry and troubles grow from words planted within. Good and evil develop from what is held in the heart. The heart-mind creates *Alaya* stored consciousness. Cultivate stillness, make it source of heart-mind, and the six paramitas (charity, precepts, persevere, strength, Zen & Vipasyana) will flourish instead. Such a heart-mind will be great in its deeds. Reflect on the following:

The storehouse consciousness, originally spotless, is pure and clean, no stain or falsity there. To dwell with true blessing and wisdom, is to see heart-mind as a pure, round moon. No substance, no distractions allowed there, Indeed, there is no moon there either. It is due to making blessing real for others, That my heart-mind is empty, like the pure full moon.

Skiping and dancing, the heart is filled with joy.

Repeatedly it sings to the heavenly worthies.

Now I have indeed seen my heart-mind.

It is pure and clean, like a full, round moon.

Leaving all worries, troubles, impurity,

Able to control all that mind holds and controls,

All the Buddhas respond to me, saying:
 Your heart originally was like this, but when
 It sojourned in the world's dust, it vanished.
 The awakened heart-mind is a pure heart.
 When you envision your heart as a pure full moon,
 Then you will know the Buddha's enlightened mind.
 Again We give you a heart-mind mantra;
 Secretly recite it, while contemplating within.
 Hail heart-mind enlightened! Arise from within me.

3. *Envision the Stupa.*

The meditator now puts on Vairocana's firm and strengthened Bodhi heart-mind. First, envision the stupa, as follows:

- a. Vairocana Buddha, center section, as the seed word VAM:
- b. Vajrasattva section, bottom or east sector, seed word HUM:
- c. Ratna (Jewel) sector, south or left side, seed word TRAH:
- d. Lotus or Amida sector, top or west side, seed word HRIH:
- e. Amogha Action section, north or right side, seed word AH:



This vision is called a *samaya* or symbolic Vajra stupa, and it is kept in mind as the verse and mantra are recited:

Now that you can see the heart as a moon disk,
 Round and full, glowing and radiating light,
 All the Buddhas respond to the vision and say:
 The Bodhi heart-mind, strengthen it!
 Again let us teach you a heart-mind mantra;
 See a circular Vajra stupa,
 Like a moon-orb above the heart.
 Inside the wheel revolves a seed word, Vam!
 It becomes a Dharma wheel stupa.



Now once more intone the mantra: "Hail firm Vajra-lotus stupa!"

As the mantra is intoned, envision that the seed word *Vam* is implanted firmly in the center of the Vajra and Lotus stupa, making them one.

4. *Pervading fragrance.* My body becomes the stupa.

The fourth aspect of Vairocana is the all pervading fragrance of the Vajra-lotus, which spreads like a wind throughout the cosmos.

O thou meditator, now one with the moon orb,
 Envision therein an eight petaled lotus.
 Let it fill the entire Dharma world, everywhere,
 So that there is only one great lotus blossom.
 Now realize that your own body, with the Vajra
 World's wisdom and Lotus World's reason, is one.



Form the lotus mudra with the left and right hands to symbolize a lotus blossom opening. Revolve the mudra three times to the right, and recite the mantra:

Hail! Spread everywhere, Vajra Stupa!

- a. Visualize that the stupa and my body are one. See the lotus in the center of the moon inside my body turn into a stupa, that swells and fills the entire Dharma world.
- b. See all of the Buddhas who fill the Lotus and Vajra worlds enter my body. My body now glows with an effervescent light, the brilliance of which illumines the entire world and its myriad phenomena.

Hail Vajra Stupa, my body! Vam!

- c. Shrink the stupa. Envision the one great stupa that fills the entire world to become small again, the size of my body. See that all of the Buddhas of the void, empty space world also shrink with the stupa, and become part of my body. Recite the mantra :

Hail vajra stupa, shrink!

5. The fifth aspect, *my body and Vairocana are one.*

Form the Great Sword mudra, the symbol of Vairocana. Then chant the following:

I am the stupa body, resplendent on high, without limits.

Again and again, all the Buddhas say it!

I have become the Lotus body!

Now is the time that all the Tathagatas

Urge us on to the path of enlightenment.

Envision my own body to be the Honzon (Vairocana).

Again, see myself, one with the stupa,

Change and become the Great Vairocana!

On my head is the five diadem crown,

Dwelling within the symbolic mudra.

Again we teach this mantric summons:

Hail, All ye Tathagatas, See!

I and Thou now are made one!



See the vajra-lotus stupa change and become Vairocana Buddha, head crowned with the five jeweled crown, body ornately adorned, hands held in the mudra of Vairocana (see illustration). The meditator should now envision the central hall of the Vajra Mandala, seeing how Vairocana extends the light issuing outward from this mudra to all the beings of the mandala, and the entire cosmos. (See explanation below Chap. 3, part 4).

II. *Embrace the Buddhas of the Four Mudra Hall.*

The meditator now enters the Hall of the Four Mudra Assembly, and puts on or assumes the characteristics of the four Buddhas who dwell there. The meditation is divided into two parts, this first in which the meditator embraces or "adheres to" the four Buddhas, and the second (II.B below) in which the meditator is consecrated by an *Abhiseka* crowning with flowers.

A. *Embrace Vairocana and the Four Buddhas.*

1. Embrace Vairocana. Continue to hold the Great Sword mudra of Part I.B.5 above, and while pressing this mudra to the heart, see that Vairocana is the source for the manifestation of all other Buddhas, so that by becoming Vairocana, I have fulfilled all the marks of a Buddha in myself. This fulfillment is possible by the light given by Vairocana to all sentient beings, and is due to no merits of my own. Due to the grace of Vairocana, I am able to see that the real and the phenomenal are both empty, not to be adhered to by judgment of any

sort, but simply perceived by the gaze of intuitive wisdom, i.e., *vipasyana* (jr-gwan, Jpn.: shikan 止觀). See that the four Buddhas I am about to embrace emanate from Vairocana. Recite the Mantra, and press the mudra to the heart:

Hail All Tathagatas, totally enlightened,

Enduring Vajra, dwell here within me!



2. Embrace Vajrasattva, Buddha of the East. Vajrasattva, *Ashuku*, Buddha of the East or bottom circle of the mandala, an avatar of Acala the Unmoveable, is called forth and embraced by the seed word *Hum*. Recite the mantra:

Hail, Vajrasattva, dwell within me! Hum!



3. Embrace Vajra Ratna, Buddha of the South. Next, embrace the Buddha of the right or south side of the Vajra Mandala, Ratna Sambhava, who is called forth the seed word *Trah*. Recite the mantra:

Hail, Vajraratna, dwell within me, TRAH!



4. Embrace Amida, Buddha of the West. Next, embrace the Buddha of the top, or west side of the Vajra mandala, Amida, the Buddha of Immeasurable Life. Chant the mantra, Lotus Dharma made one with me:

Hail, Vajradharma, dwell within me, Hrih!



5. Embrace Amoghasiddhi, Buddha of the North. Last, embrace the Buddha of the right or north side of the Vajra mandala, Amoghasiddhi. See Vajrakarma (i.e. Vajra deeds) inside me. Recite the mantra:

Hail, Vajrakarma, dwell within me, Ah!



B. The Abhiseka or consecration by crowning.

The meditator now receives the *Abhiseka* or consecration of the self to the service of Vairocana Buddha by donning a crown.

1. Form the Vairocana sword mudra, and place this on the top center of the head, seeing self crowned and consecrated as Vairocana, and water sprinkled over the crown.

Hail, all the Tathagata are ordained by Thee (Vairocana) Hum!



2. Form the Vajrasattva sword mudra, and touching this to the front of the head, see oneself consecrated by Vajrasattva:

Hail Vajrasattva, ordain me, Hum!



3. Form the Vajra jewel mudra, and touch it to the right side of the head. See Vajraratna consecrate me with his crown:

Hail, Vajraratna, ordain me, Trah!



4. Form the Dharma lotus mudra of Amida, and touch it to the back of the head. See Amida consecrate me with his crown:

Hail, Vajra Lotus, ordain me, Hrih!



5. Form the Vajra deed mudra, and touch it to the left side of the head. See Amoghasiddhi consecrate me with his crown:

Hail, Vajra Karma, ordain me, Ah!



III. The Puja Offering Assembly Hall.

The meditator now proceeds into the Hall of the Puja Offerings, to the left or south side of the Vajra mandala. Here he sees him or herself receive a flower lei from Vairocana and the four major Buddhas, while fastening the crowns on his head with mudra and mantra.

First, the individual mudra of each of the five Buddhas is formed, and while held to the heart, the mantra is recited once. Then while reciting the mantra two more times, form the thunder-vajra fist with both hands (thumb tucked into closed fist, index finger pressing thumb), and tie the crown to the front and back of the head by mime. Finally use the same thunder-vajra fist, and lay a lei garland of flowers around one's neck, as Vairocana receiving leis from the Buddhas of the four quadrants. Dissolve the mudra at the waist, when finished.

A. *The Flower Crowns.*

The Puja offerings are given by myself to Vairocana, and then by Vairocana to all the Buddhas of the Vajra world. Whatever I or any of the Vajra World worthies have received, must be given away for the sake of all sentient beings. I, too, must give my crown and flower wreath away, the equivalent of giving it to Vairocana. The same five mudra used in steps two and three above are formed during the recitation of the Puja offering mantra. The seed word VAM , identifying self with Vairocana, completes each of the mantra:

1. Receive a flower lay from Vairocana. "Om! Thou who ordains all Tathagata, crown me with thy flowers, Vam!"
2. "Hail, Vajrasattva, flower crown me, Vam!"
3. "Hail, Vajraratna, flower crown me, Vam!"
4. "Hail, Vajra Lotus, flower crown me, Vam!"
5. "Hail, Vajra Deeds, flower crown me, Vam!"

B. *Put on the Vajra Armor.*

In the following meditation the armor of Vajrasattva is tied to the nine places of the body by use of mudra and mantra. The meditator sees the armor attached to the body by a dark blue cord, tied to the forehead, right shoulder, left shoulder, heart, right side of chest, left side of chest, navel, right hip, and left hip respectively. The vajra armor assists me to bring saving compassion and happiness to all sentient beings by overcoming all forms of impurity, anger, resentment, envy, and selfishness. The preceding meditations of crowning and flower garlands were aimed at the interior, whereas the armor meditation strengthens us to do works of loving compassion in face of all opposition.

1. First form the Vajra armor mudra (palms upright and together, touch the index fingers to the first joint of the third fire fingers, with thumbs together and upright), and recite the mantra once. Then, while touching each of the nine places, recite the seed words *Om!* *Tom!* nine times. Use the extended index fingers to mime the tying of the cord, by turning them three times at each place. The word *Om* generates a blue cord, and the word *Tom* binds the armor with the cord.

In the name of all Vajras, Oh Vajra Armor, Hum! Om! Tom!

2. Vajra Clap. At this point the meditator has completely assumed the Vajra body, and claps in joy that the three vehicles (Theravada, Mahayana, and Tantrayana) all practice the Buddha's four noble truths and eightfold path equally. The Vajra assembly join the practitioner in clapping, as do the other monks who attend the Vajra liturgy. The Ajari masters in the solitudes of Mt. Hiei allow the practitioner to dance at this point, as an expression of joy while the other monks clap, and recite the mantra:

Hail, Vajra Clap, Hoh!

IV. The Hall of Undefined Wisdom.

The meditator now enters the *Wei-hsi* Assembly of undefined wisdom, the bottom left corner of the mandala assembly. Freed from passion and delusion, the meditator sees a great moon orb, which rests on an eight-petaled lotus. On the lotus throne is seated *Kongo Butcho* (Vajrasattva) in the full lotus position. In his left hand he holds the five pronged vajra bell pressed to his waist, and in his right hand a five pronged vajra pressed to his heart.

A. Become Vajrasattva.

1. While contemplating this vision, see oneself in a state of symbolic oneness with Samantabhadra, that is, a person in whom meditation and practice are one. He or she recites the mantra, becoming one with undefined wisdom:

Om, Dwell in Vajra wisdom, Ah!

2. Take into one's hands the sword of undefined wisdom:

Hail, Vajrasattva, Ah!

3. The meditator now sees self become Vajrasattva:

Hail, Vajrasattva, abundant joy, Ah!



B. Perform the Four Binding Mudra.

The four binding mudra, *Jah, Hum, Bam, Koh*, are used to bind the eidetic (moving) vision to the meditator so that vision and viewer are one. In this case, the meditator is bound to Vajrasattva:

Jah! Um! Bam! Koh! (Hook! Enter! Bound! Joy!)

C. Prepare to Enter the Samaya Hall.

In this, the last meditation of Part Three, the meditator prepares to enter the lower, that is, the bottom center hall of the Vajra mandala, Part Four of the Vajra Mandala liturgy. First form the Wisdom Sword mudra of Samantabhadra, hands clasped in a fist with the third fingers straight up and touching. Recite the mantra, changing the vision of Vajrasattva into a symbolic image, as in the illustration:

One with Symbol, Vam!

Then form the two vajra-thunder fists, thumbs tucked into the clenched fists, pressed down by the index fingers. Take the five pointed vajra in the right hand, and press it to the heart and the five pronged vajra bell in the left hand pressed to the hips, as in the picture of Vajrasattva. Then recite the mantra three times:

I and symbol One! One with the great symbol!



Part 4. The Center of the Vajra

In the fourth part of the Vajra liturgy, the meditator enters the second Hall of Samaya symbols, at the bottom center of the Vajra mandala. Here he/she envisions Mt. Sumeru, the center of the Buddhist cosmos. From there the meditator proceeds into the final, central hall of the Vajra world, to meditate on the grand vision of the Vajra assembly. Here Vairocana is seen in all his splendor. All of the other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who serve him spread loving compassion and the light of saving wisdom to the entire cosmos. This fourth stage of the creative vision is the climax and high point of the Vajra mandala meditation.

I. *The Great Ocean.*



Form the Zen-Samatha mudra, open right palm over the open left palm, thumbs touching at the tips. Lay the mudra in the lap, and envision in front of the self a great ocean. The ocean is filled with fresh water made fragrant by the eight virtues (pure, cool, good tasting, soft, moistening, comforting, thirst quenching, and nourishing). In this ocean see the Vajra stupa arise, in reverse position, that is, with the space symbol on the floor of the ocean, arising through wind, water, earth, to Mt. Sumeru on top.

A. *Envision the Vajra Stupa.*

1. See first the seed word *Ken* ཀྣ at the bottom of the ocean. The seed word becomes the space symbol, like the top of a stupa. Its color is that of the rainbow. Above the space cakra is the seed word *Kam*. It emanates a blue-black color, that shrinks and expands until it forms a quarter moon, symbol of the wind. ཀླ
2. Next, above the wind cakra see the seed word *Vam* འུ . It is white in color. Expanding and contracting it forms a great water cakra, circular in shape.
3. Above the water wheel now appears the seed word *Pra* ཤ . It is gold in color, and changes into a huge golden tortoise, symbol of the earth cakra. From it come forth resplendent, limitless rays of light that spread and diffuse everywhere.
4. On top of the turtle's back is the seed word *Su* ཨ , which turns into a wondrous, high mountain, adorned with the four treasures (gold, silver, gems, and crystal), which enthrone the Ruler of the Mountain (Vairocana).
5. See the seed word *Ken* ཀྣ on the mountain top. It changes and become seven gold peaks, surrounding Mt. Sumeru in orderly succession. The Great Ocean filled with the water of the Eight virtues surrounds the seven peaks. While contemplating this vision, separate the thumbs slightly, and move the fingers up and down, representing the waves of the ocean that move and sparkle in the light emanating from the mountains. Continue to hold the mudra at waist level, and recite the mantra:

Hail, Pure Ocean, Hum!



B. *Envision Mount Sumeru.*

Enclose the fingers and thumbs of both hands inside the clasped, closed fists, tucking the right thumb under the left. See this mudra to be the eight peaks of Mt. Sumeru (seven lesser peaks plus Mt. Sumeru, with Vairocana enthroned on seven lions). This image is now imprinted inside the heart of the meditator, while reciting the mantra:

Om! Acala, Hum!



1. Contemplate the Sacred Mandala.



Now at the gateway of the central part of the Mandala, the meditator envisions the Vajra stupa that stands atop Mt. Sumeru. The hands are again formed in the Samadhi mudra, open palms with fingers intertwined on the lap, thumb-tips touching. See a wondrously high mountain, on the summit of which is a stupa made up of the five seed words, *Vam, Hum, Trah, Hrih, and AH*. See the stupa become a great palace, with four massive corners and four great gates at its base. See the ornate decorations that fill the interior of the palace.

2. Again, envision the exterior of the pavilion to be studded with all sorts of gems, bells, and precious ornaments, sparkling so brightly as to dim the splendor of the sun and moon.

3. Contemplate the Mandala Center, i.e., now envision the central hall of the Vajra Mandala. Within the great palace atop Mt. Sumeru is a great mandala, the center of the Vajra world. In the very center of the mandala is the seed word *Shin* (𑖦𑖅𑖫𑖛), to the left and right of which are the seed words *Ah* (𑖦𑖅𑖫𑖛). The seed words change, and become a throne made of eight lions. Over the lions is a full moon, inside of which is a lotus throne. On the throne is the seed word *Vam* (𑖦𑖅𑖫𑖛), brilliant white in color. The word changes and becomes a stupa. The stupa then changes and becomes the Great Vairocana. His body is the color of the moon. On his head he wears the Five Buddha Jewel crown, and his body is clothed in the finest silk, adorned with splendid jewels. His hands form the "dwelling in wisdom" mudra, i.e., the upright index finger of the right hand is enclosed between the thumb and index fingers of the left hand. Light emanates from the mudra.

4. A brilliant light also diffuses everywhere from the forehead of Vairocana. It spreads outward and fills the ten directions, i.e., the entire world without measure. Bright light flows everywhere from the body of Vairocana as well, from the chest, left and right shoulders, and back, in all four directions. A blue light shines from the front, gold from the right, red from the left, and rainbow colors from behind.

5. Embrace the Sacred Cakra of the Mandala Center.

Form the *Jah! Hum! Bam! Hoh!* mudra, embracing the entire cakra of the Mandala center. Then, while maintaining the last *Hoh* aspect of the mudra, lift the entwined fingers to the mouth and drink from the mudra, to symbolize the interiorization of the entire mandala center.

Hail, Vajra Cakra, Hum!

Jah! Hum! Bam! Hoh! (Hook, enter, bind, Joy!



6. Envision the entire central portion of the mandala, with each of the five central Buddhas seated on a special throne:

- Vam*, Vairocana, is seated on an eight lion throne.
- Hum*, Ashuku, is seated on a vajra throne.
- Trah*, Ratna, is seated on a horse-like throne.
- Hrih*, Amida, is seated on a pheasant throne.
- Am*, Amoghasiddhi, is seated on a latticed jewel throne.

C. Envision the Central Hall of the Vajra.

See that the central Vajra hall is made up of three squares that enclose a circle, inside of which are five smaller circles. Four of these internal circles surround the central circle of Vairocana to the west (top), south (left), east (bottom), and north (right). To arrive at the

central hall of the mandala, the meditator moved from square nine in the bottom right hand corner of the greater mandala, in a counter-clockwise direction, to square one in the center. Now the motion is reversed. The shining light from Vairocana, and the giving aspects of all the Buddha and Bodhisattva are sent outwards, in a clockwise direction. The figures in the central hall of the Vajra World are listed below (see illustration).

A. Vairocana, in the center of the assembly, is surrounded by the four paramita or connecting Buddhas:

- a. Vajraparamita, who gives to Aksobhya [B] in the east;
- b. Ratnaparamita, who gives to Ratnasambhava [C] in the south;
- c. Dharmaparamita, who gives to Amida [D] in the west;
- d. Karmaparamita, who gives to Amoghasiddhi [E] in the north.

B. Aksobhya, in the lower circle of the east gives light to the northeasterly direction through four Bodhisattva:

1. Vajrasattva, Bodhisattva of enlightenment, west;
2. Vajraraja, King of the Vajra Bodhisattva, north;
3. Vajraraga, Bodhisattva of love, south;
4. Vajrasadhu, Bodhisattva of joy, east.

C. Ratnasambhava, to the right or south of center gives light to the south and east through four Bodhisattva:

5. Vajratatna, Bodhisattva of precious gems, north;
6. Vajratejas, Bodhisattva of light, east;
7. Vajraketu, Bodhisattva of the banner, west;
8. Vajrahasu, Bodhisattva of the kind smile, south.

D. Amida (Lokeśvara) of the top or west of center gives light to the southwest, through four Bodhisattva:

9. Vajradharma, Bodhisattva of the Law, east;
10. Vajratiksna, Bodhisattva of benefit for all, south;
11. Vajrahetu, Bodhisattva of causation, north;
12. Vajrabhasa, Bodhisattva of speech, west.

E. Amoghasiddhi, to the right or north of center, gives light to the north and west through four Bodhisattva:

13. Vajrakarma, Bodhisattva of deeds, south;
14. Vajraraksa, Bodhisattva who defends us, west;
15. Vajrayaksa, Bodhisattva teeth, east;
16. Vajrasamdhī, Bodhisattva fist, north.

F. The four corners of the inner circle of the mandala picture the lady Bodhisattva who bring puja-offerings to Vairocana:

- a.2 Vajralasi, Bodhisattva of happiness, southeast;
- b.2 Vajramala, Bodhisattva of adorned hair, southwest;
- c.2 Vajragita, Bodhisattva of song, northwest;
- d.2 Vajranrtya, Bodhisattva of dance, northeast.

G. The four corners of the inner square depict the four elements that surround and protect the *space* center of the circle. These are: I. Privithi, spirit of earth, seen as a female figure in the lower right corner; II. Agni, spirit of fire, in the lower left corner; III. Varuna the water spirit in the upper left corner, with nine dragon-like serpents in the coifure; and IV. Vayu, spirit of wind, in the upper right corner.

H. The four corners of the second square depict the four Boddhisattva of external puja offerings to Vairocana:

- a.3 Vajradhupa, Boddhisattva of burning incense, southeast;
- b.3 Vajrapuspa, Boddhisattva of flower offerings, southwest;
- b.3 Vajraloka, Boddhisattva of the Lamp, northwest;
- b.4 Vajragandha, Boddhisattva of powder incense, southwest.

I. The second square also depicts the four Boddhisattva who assist Vairocana in the four directions, as follows:

- a.4 Vajrankuca, Vajra Hook Boddhisattva, bottom, east;
- b.4 Vajrapaca, Vajra Cord Boddhisattva, left, south;
- c.4 Vajrasphota, Vajra Lock Boddhisattva, top, west;
- d.4 Vajraveca, Vajra Bell Boddhisattva, right, north.

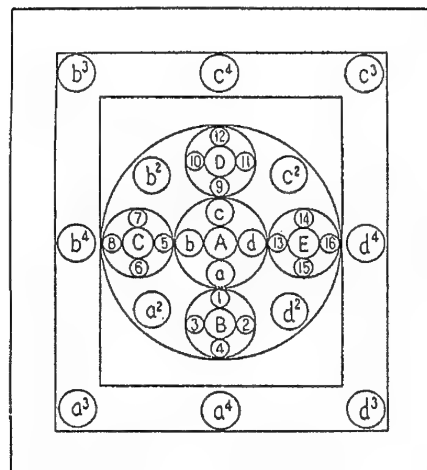
N.B. The Tendai version of this second square adds four images to each of the four sides of the hallway. The images are seen in clockwise order (right to left) from the lower northeast corner:

- East quarter: Maitreya, Amogha Seer, Evil Destroyer, Stop Sorrow;
- South: Incense Elephant, Vigor, Space Storehouse, Wisdom Banner;
- West: Amida, Wisdom Protector, Light Net, Pure Moonlight Buddha;
- North: Endless Wisdom, Manjusri, Vajra Storehouse, Samantabadhra.

J. In the spaces between these eight Boddhisattva of the second square are depicted the 1,000 Buddhas of the *Bhadrakalpa*, i.e., the Buddhas of past, present, and future who represent the innumerable transformations of Vairocana inside each one of us.

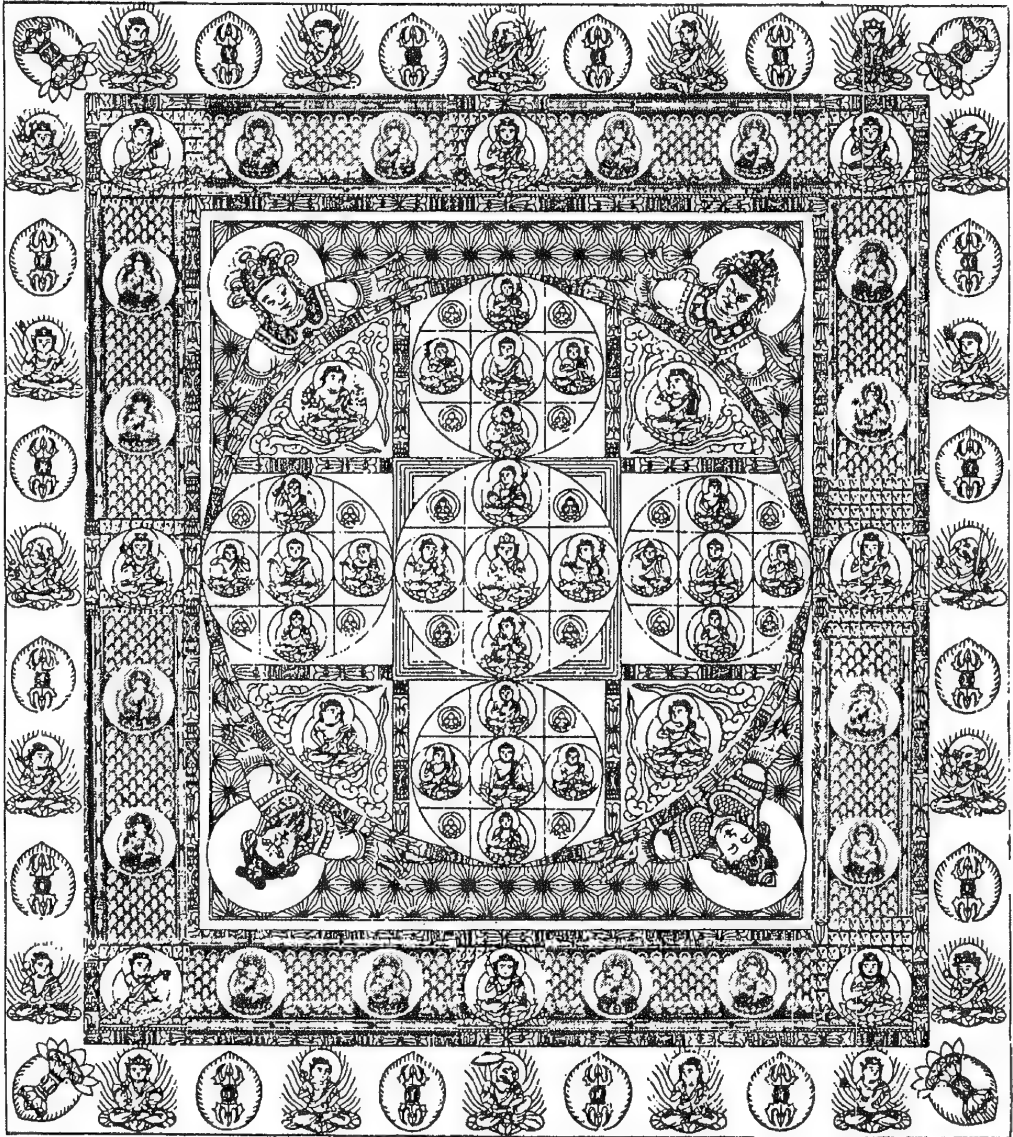
K. Finally, the third or outer square of the central assembly hall depicts the twenty spirits of the Vedic religion, whose images are shared with the folk religions of East Asia. The twenty figures, starting from the bottom right hand corner and proceeding clockwise (right to left), five to a side, are as follows:

1. Narayana, (Naraenden)
2. Kumara, (Kumaraten)
3. Vajrachinna, (Kongozaiten)
4. Brahman, (Bonten)
5. Indra, Cakra, (Taishakuten)
6. Aditya, (Nitten, Sun spirit)
7. Candra, (Gatten, Moon spirit)
8. Vajrabhaksana, (Kongojikiten)
9. Ketu, (Suisciden)
10. Pingala, (Keiwakuten)
11. Raksasa, (Rasetsuten)
12. Vayu, (Futen, Wind spirit)



13. Vajravin, (Kongoeten)
14. Agni, (Katen, Fire spirit)
15. Vaisravana, (Bishamonten)
16. Vajramukha, (Kongomenten)
17. Yama, (Enmaten)
18. Jaya, (Jobukuten)
19. Vinayaka, (Binayakaten)
20. Varuna, (Suiten, Water spirit)

The four corners of the outer square depict the four great light kings, Acala (northeast), Yaksa (southeast), Kundalin (southwest), and Yamantaka (northwest). Vajra symbols surrounded with flames separate each of the figures in the outer square. The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the central assembly hall are each to be encountered in the next stages of the Vajra meditation.



Part 5. Give Away all Merit

The fifth section of the Vajra meditation is taken for the most part from the Eighteen Path mandala, as seen in Chapter I above. The following meditations and hymns are special to the Vajra ritual.

A. *Public Invitation to all the Assembly to Enter.*

See self as Vajrasattva formally inviting all of the worthies of the Assembly to enter the banquet hall. The entire assembly of the Central Hall is invited by a lengthy poem in siddham sanskrit meter called *Indra-vajra Upenda-vajra*. The meditator sees all of the Buddhas of the center Assembly, including the myriad Badhrakalpa Buddhas of the second square hall, float into the sacred area on clouds.

B. *The 108 Songs for the Buddhas of the Vajra Center.*

A song is sung for each of the worthies as they enter, consisting of eight phrases, four lines to a hymn.

C. *The meditator offers all of the gifts emanating from Vairocana to the entire cosmos.* The gifts are first collected by the offering is done by the four binding mudras:

1. See compassionate love grasped from within one's heart, and with joy offer it to others.

Vajra Hook, Jah!

2. See the understanding of the Vajra world enter the mind of all others.

Vajra bonds, Hum!

3. See that all of the benefits deriving from the Vajra Ritual meditation are not mine, but belong to Vairocana. They must be totally given away for the sake of all others. See also that I must break away from all selfish thoughts and deeds, to live as Vairocana.

Vajra break the lock, Bam!

4. See that I am indeed one with Vairocana. Henceforth my life must be given entirely to Vairocana, in compassion and love for others.

Vajra Joy, Hoh!

D. *Vajra Clapping.* The meditator now envisions him or herself offering a dance and clapping the hands in front of the assembly, as an expression of happiness and rejoicing. The hands are clapped and the mantra is recited three times:

Om, Vajra clapping, Hoh, Hoh, Hoh!

E. *Offer pure Aka water to the assembly.* Pick up the bowl of pure Aka water, and offer it to the assembly to drink. The water here symbolizes the leveling or equalizing of one's own nature with the Vajra world, that is, all of the impurities and instabilities of phenomenal nature are washed clean and dissolved in the Aka water. The water is also symbolic of the sprinkling rite of ordination, *Kancho* that consecrated me totally to Vairocana.

Water be purified, Hum! Phat!

1. The water is then offered first to Gozanze, then to all of the worthies. While holding the water in front of the three places, head, heart level, and belly, intone the Mantra:

Hail, Nisumbha Vajra, Hum!

May this water, originally pure at its source,

Wash us all, make our bodies pure and stainless.

So that we never abandon the original vows,

Let this (water) be proof of duty fulfilled.

Hail, Vajra Water, Trah! Hum!

2. Next, put the water bowl back in its place, and form the mudra which symbolizes a universal water offering; fold the four fingers of both hands down over the thumbs, and repeat the mantra three times, seeing that all of my vows are fulfilled for eternity.

Hail Vajra Water, Trah! Hum!

F. The Lotus Throne.

Next, the meditator offers a beautiful, fully opened lotus to Gozanze (Nisumbha) and the entire multitude. See a fully opened pink lotus held in the hands. While forming the Open Lotus mudra, recite the mantra and offer the lotus:

Om, Open Lotus, Svaha!

G. Ring the Vajra bell.

1. The meditator now visualizes him or herself to be Samantabhadra, with a five pronged vajra in the right hand, and a five pronged vajra bell in the left. Fold the thumb of the both hands under the closed fist. Put left fist to waist, and touch the five places with the right fist, belly, heart, both shoulders, throat, and head, while reciting the mantra:

Om, Vajra Hand, Hum!

2. Next, bend the left hand downward from the wrist, fingers extended, imitating the ringing of a bell. Hold the right hand (vajra fist mudra) against the heart, and press the thumb of the left hand inward, ringing the bell three times while reciting:

Om, Vajra Bell, ring! HOH!

H. Invite the Assembly to give offerings.

Form the Vajra-anjali clasped hands mudra, and invite the assembly to attend the banquet. See that eight lady Boddhisattva respond to this summons, that is, the four internal puja Boddhisattva, and the four external puja Boddhisattva, (pages 21-23 above). The meditator here sees the eight lady Boddhisattva to awaken, and prepares for the next two visualizations:

1. The Puja-offerings of the Eight Boddhisattva.

a. Vajra Lassie Boddhisattva offers a smile.

b. Vajra Coiffure offers a splendid colored crown.

c. Vajra Songstress offers music.

d. Vajra Dancer fills the body with the Buddha's joy.

e. Incense Boddhisattva offers burning incense.

f. Flower Boddhisattva offers blossoms and fruit.

g. Lamp Boddhisattva offers light to the world.

h. The Ointment Boddhisattva offers powder incense.

I. The Grand Offering of Food and Drink.

The meditator envisions the Buddha of the West, Amida, to bring all sorts of flowers, incense, adornments, clothes, garlands, fronds, and branches to Vairocana and all sentient beings as offerings. The meditator sees that he or she too must offer these things to all sentient beings. The ritual follows the food offerings of the Eighteen Path mandala. The offerings conclude with the following prayer:

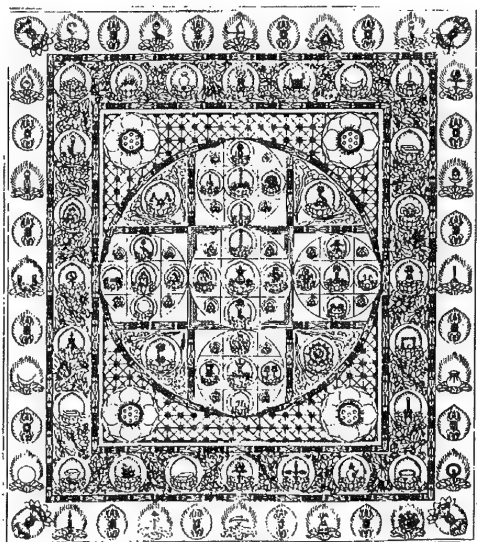
Today I offer this universal puja,
 Each and every particle of dust,
 All real (事) and phenomenal (理) things.
 The real and phenomenal everywhere
 are the entire Dharma ocean.
 The Dharma ocean is in fact the total puja offering.

The offering of self and others,
 The four-fold Dharma body
 (Self-born, received, transformed, one with Vairocana)
 The Three Worlds (past, present, future)
 Are equally an eternal offering.
 Willing or unwilling, we are all bound together, one,
 Self and others firmly residing
 In the hidden storehouse of tantric treasure.

J. The Hundred Word Mantra is sung to the Vajra.

Hail Vajra Stupa, symbol of union, protect us!
 Hail Vajra nature, be always present in me!
 Let thy marvels be born in me,
 Let thy love be present in me,
 Fill me with thy nourishing presence,
 Let all thy wondrous powers be granted to me,
 Let all thy deeds, heartfelt blessings, be done by me,
 Ha! Ha! Ha! Hoh!
 Oh honored stupa, all Tathagata, never abandon me,
 Lady Vajra born! To this great union awakened!

This ends part five of the Vajra meditation.



Part 6. Concluding the Vajra Meditation

I. The Sixth Stage: *Enter Samadhi.*

The sixth stage of the Vajra Mandala meditation, as in the Eighteen Path, Goma, and Lotus World rituals, consists in quiet contemplative experience of Samadhi meditation. The meditator assumes the position of Zen meditation, i.e., hands folded with palms up in the lap, thumbs touching. The heart-mind is envisioned as a huge full moon, in the center of which is a lotus. On top of the lotus is a seed word, the vision of which depends upon the specific meditation. Thus the Word *Ah* is used in the Eighteen Path and the Lotus Mandala, while the words *Ah* with *Kham* are used in the Goma. Here the word *Vam* is to be envisioned, which changes successively into Vairocana, the Vajra stupa, and then fills the entire Dharma world.

The ritual follows the order of the Samadhi meditation in the Eighteen Path Mandala, with the following changes.

A. *The meditation of Samadhi.*

1. See the seed word *Vam* atop a Lotus in a great moon disk. The seed word swells and becomes the vajra stupa, with the five seed words *Vam*, *Hum*, *Trah*, *Hrih*, *Ah*. This stupa swells and fills the entire Dharma world, and my body as well. It then changes into the form of Vairocana, with the five Buddha gems in the crown, body finely adorned, and the hands held in the vajra-wisdom mudra.
2. See that due to the power of Vairocana, through the seed words and vision before me, that words and speech must not be held onto (*Vam*), that the defilements of our deeds, good and bad, are washed away and purified (*Hum*), that the only treasure we have is the treasure of emptiness (*Trah*), and that emptying is possible only through compassion and giving (*Hrih*). Finally see that true bodhi enlightenment is due to the non-arising of deeds, attachments, and Dharma (*Ah*). Thus the work of Vairocana to enlighten all sentient beings by compassion is indeed my work.

B. *The Buddha Eye mantra:*

Chant the Mantra in Honor of Buddha Locana, as follows:

In the name of all Buddhas, Ken!
Void gift, most wonderful sign of union with the void,
All unveiling strength, thine Eyes shine forth light,
In Amoghavajra's name, Svaha!

This ends part six of the Vajra meditation.

II. *The Seventh Stage.*

The seventh and last stage of the Vajra mandala meditation is from the last stage of the Eighteen Path liturgy. The following additions are made to the concluding steps of the ritual, as described in Part One.

A. *Farewell to Each Hall of the Vajra Assembly.*

Hold the five pronged vajra, incense burner, and beads in the right hand, and strike the chime with the mallet in the right hand, while reciting a farewell to each part of the Vajra:

1. Farewell to the Three Worlds, Heavenly Multitude, may your joy in the Dharma ever increase! (strike the gong for each name).

2. Farewell to the Vajra World Mandala.

Form the Gozanze mudra, by crossing right hand over left, hooking the little fingers, and extending the index fingers like Gozanze's teeth. Recite the mantra and revolve the mudra to the left three times:

Hail, Sumbha Nisumbha, Hum!

Grrr! Grrr! (Out all evil) Hum!

Kick out all evil, Hum!

Forever and ever, Hoh!

Honored Vajra, Hum! Farewell!

3. Dissolve the Vajra World mandala.

Form the Great Sword mudra, third fingers touching, bent at the top joint, index fingers extended, and recite the mantra to dissolve each of the nine assemblies:

Om! Vajra! Muh!

4. See off the Assemblies.

Again form the Great Sword mudra. Hold a lotus bud, or a kema painted lotus leaf between the extended and tightly pressed third fingers. Kneel on the right knee to recite the mantra, and throw the petal into the air, feeling sorrow and regret at seeing off the assembly. Recite:

May I hereby take all thy victorious merits,
And give them away to all sentient beings,
I only beg Thee, each holy one return to thy kingdom,
Do not forget your original vow, to come back again!

5. Transfer the Merits to all sentient beings:

Om! For the sake of all sentient beings,
May these merits be transferred to all!
Mandala dissolved, each return to their Buddha realm,
Come again, Yea! O thou Stupa enlightened, farewell!

6. Farewell to each of the Five Central Buddhas.

Form the mudra for each of the five Buddhas, and recite the mantra of farewell, as follows:

a. Vairocana. The Great Sword mudra.

Hail, Thou who enlightens all Tathagata,
Dwell within me, Vajracitta!

b. East, Aksobhya:

Hail, Vajrasattva, dwell within me, Hum!

c. South, Ratnasambhava:

Hail Vajra Jewel, dwell within me, Trah!

d. West, Amida:

Hail, Vajra Dharma, dwell within me, Hrih!

e. North, Amoghasiddhi:

Hail, Vajra Deeds, dwell within me, Ah!

7. Homage to the *Abhiseka* crowning of the Five Buddhas.

Again form the mudra proper to each of the Five Buddhas, and touch it to the head while reciting the mantra:

- a. Vairocana: who ordained all Tathagata in light, Hum!
- b. Aksobhya: Hail, Vajrasattva who crowned me, Hum!
- c. Ratnasambhava: Hail, Jewel who crowned me, Trah!
- d. Amida: Hail, Vajra Dharma who crowned me, Hrih!
- e. Amoghasiddhi: Hail, Vajra Doer, who crowned me, Ah!

8. Untie and take off the Armor.

Untie and remove the armor that was donned on page 84, above, using the Om-ton mudra and mantra:

Oh Precious Vajra who ordained me,
All ye mudra who strengthened and fulfilled me,
(Thanks) for thy Wondrous Armour, Vam! Om! Don!

Repeat the last words OM-DON twelve times, while untying and removing the armor from the twelve places.

9. Vajra Clap to express thanks and joy.

Hail Vajra Clap, Hoh!

10. Bow to the Four Buddhas, and Exit.

Hail, all Tathagata offerings completed,
Oh Vajrasattva take my consecrated body to serve thee!
Oh Vajraratna take my consecrated body to serve thee!
Oh Amida take my consecrated body to serve thee!
Oh Amoghasiddhi take my consecrated body for thee!

11. Bow to each hall of the Vajra Assembly, and exit through the closing steps of the Eighteen Path mandala.

12. The meditator is again reminded that the Vajra Meditation was in vain if henceforth one's life is not filled with compassion and giving to others.

Tantric Art and Meditation: The Tendai Tradition describes the four basic meditations of Tantric Buddhism: the Eighteen-path Mandala, the Lotus-womb Mandala, the Vajra-thunder Mandala, and the Goma Rite of Fire. The book summarizes the teachings of Tendai Tantric Buddhism, as practiced on Mt. Hiei, Kyoto, by a Master of the Homan devotional (Bakhti) school, one of the major kinds of Tantric Meditation practiced in Japan. Profuse woodblock and line art illustrate the mudra, mantra, and mandala of Tantric practice.

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